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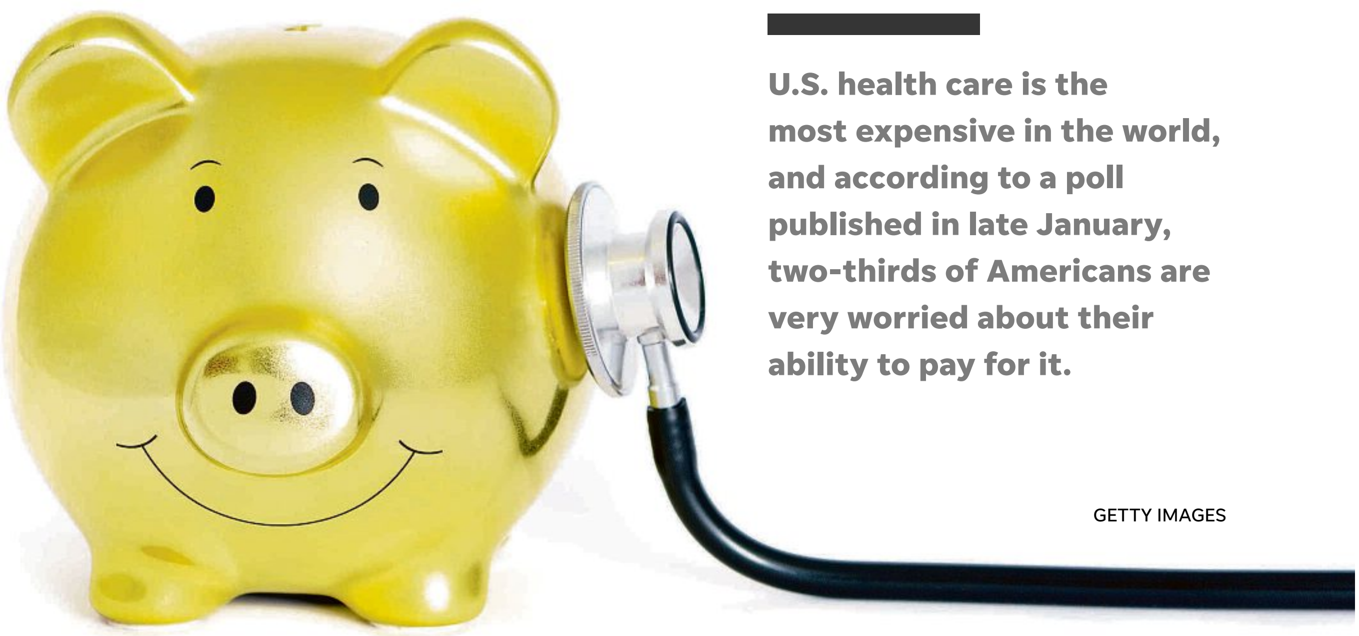
ANALYSIS

The high cost of U.S. health care



U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it.

GETTY IMAGES

Complex system, competing interests barriers to lower prices

Patrick Aguilar Washington University in St. Louis | THE CONVERSATION

In announcing its "Great Healthcare Plan" in January, the Trump administration became the latest in a long history of efforts by the U.S. government to rein in the soaring cost of health care. ● As a physician and professor studying the intersection of business and health, I know that the challenges in reforming the sprawling U.S. health care system are immense. That's partly for political and even philosophical reasons.

But it also reflects a complex system fraught with competing interests – and the fact that patients, hospitals, health insurance companies and drug manufacturers change their behaviors in conflicting ways when faced with new rules.

Soaring costs

U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it – whether it's their medications, a doctor's visit, health insurance or an unpredictably costly medical emergency.

Disputes over health policy even played a central role in the federal government shutdown in fall 2025.

Trump's health care framework outlines no specific policy actions, but it does establish priorities to address a number of longtime concerns,

See HEALTH CARE, Page 2A

When COVID-19 pandemic era Affordable Care Act subsidies expired on Jan. 1, about 1.4 million people dropped coverage, and for most who didn't, premiums more than doubled.
ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES

Latest info on proposed data center in Logan County

Claire Grant
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

While the Sangamon County Board approved a zoning permit for a $500 million data center, another one could be coming to central Illinois.

Here's what to know about the proposed data center in Logan County.

The Hut 8 data center

Hut 8 is a Miami-based energy infrastructure platform integrating power through digital infrastructure like data centers to support energy-intensive projects. The corporation operates 19 data center sites across the United States and Canada to support cryptocurrency mining, AI and cloud computing according to their website.

Where would the proposed data center be located?

The proposed data center would sit on 200 acres of land in Laenna Township and cost up to $5 billion to build.

How many jobs would the proposed data center create?

The data center would create 1,500 temporary construction jobs. If approved and once completed, the data center would have a community presence of at least 15 years according to the company webpage for the site, generate up to $65 million a year in annual property tax revenue, and create 200 permanent jobs, with some being remote.

What about property taxes?

If estimates are true, Hut 8's data center would generate more than 10 times the property taxes of CyrusOne's proposed $6 million annually, for centers nearing the same size.

One of many proposals

In August of 2025, Hut 8 announced four data center project plans, totaling 1.5 gigawatts. According to the Department of Energy, one gigawatt can power approximately 876,000 households

See DATA CENTER, Page 2A

Federal grant to provide CDL training for 17 veterans in Springfield

Tom Ackerman
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD – Nearly 20 veterans who want to become a truck driver will benefit from a federal grant at Lincoln Land Community College.

A total of $76,500 was secured through the U.S. Department of Transportation, which means 17 people will be able to earn their commercial drivers license at no cost. The program otherwise can cost $4,500.

Money is designated for qualifying veterans or their spouse or children.

The college has received this grant four times now.

Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski, D-Springfield announced the funds alongside the president of LLCC, Charlotte Warren, at the college.

Speakers cited a shortage of truck drivers industry-wide, although the program at the college has grown since its inception, partly thanks to multiple financial-assistance programs, the director of truck driving at the college said.

Curt Robinson, who is director of truck driver training at LLCC, said he has already met with a student who should be able to take advantage of the funding. The student meets guidelines

See CDL TRAINING, Page 3A

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