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PUBLIC OPINION

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ANALYSIS

The high cost of U.S. health care



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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.

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

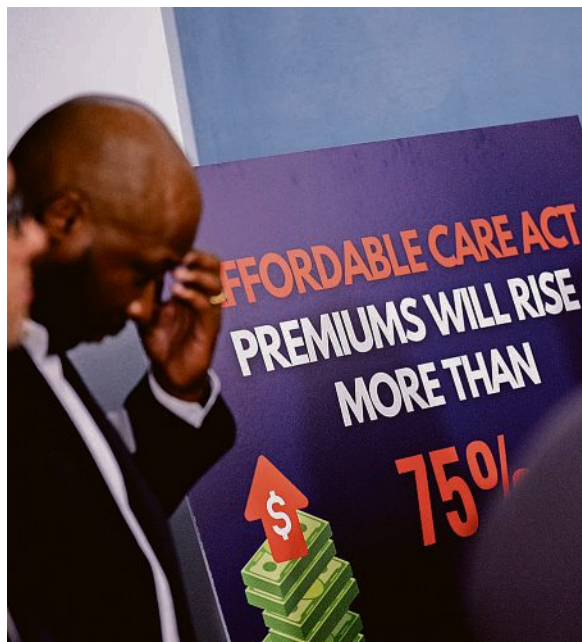
U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it – whether it’s their medications, a doctor’s visit, health insurance or an unpredictably costly medical emergency.

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, including prescription drug costs, price transparency, lowering insurance premiums and making health insurance companies generally more accountable.

Why have these challenges been so difficult to address?

See HEALTH CARE, Page 3A



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

U.S.-Iran ceasefire on tenuous ground

Swapna Venugopal Ramaswamy, Christopher Cann, Melina Khan and Michael Loria

USA TODAY

President Donald Trump’s ceasefire with Iran was on tenuous ground on April 9 after Israel launched its deadliest day of strikes on Lebanon yet and Tehran vowed not to desert its allies.

A day after announcing the Iran war ceasefire, Trump took to social media to warn the country that if the “REAL AGREEMENT” was not complied with, all U.S. military assets would remain in place ready for a military response.

He warned Iran to keep the Strait of Hormuz open and safe but did not address the strikes in Lebanon in the post.

“If for any reason it is not, which is highly unlikely, then the “Shootin’ Starts,” bigger, and better, and

See CEASEFIRE, Page 2A

Mrs. Gibble’s Candies and Restaurant to permanently close soon

Amber South

Chambersburg Public Opinion USA TODAY NETWORK

A staple in Franklin County for 50 years, Mrs. Gibble’s Candies and Restaurant is set to close on April 26.

“After 50 years of serving our community, the time has come to turn the page. April 26th will be Mrs. Gibble’s Candies and Restaurant’s last day open and we are so grateful for every customer, every memory, and every year since 1976. Thank you Greencastle for making us part of your story,” the business wrote in the Facebook post on March 29.

Mrs. Gibble’s Candies and Restaurant, located at 7325 Molly Pitcher Highway, Greencastle, is known for hand-dipped candies, dinners served family-style and pre-meal corn fritters.

See GIBBLE’S, Page 2A

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