

My name is Martha Mitchell. I retired from Federal employment after 35 years serving Social Security disability beneficiaries. First, I would like to thank you for listening to me for five minutes about the detrimental effects of Medicaid privatization on my severely disabled family member. Medicaid beneficiaries have suffered secondary to problems caused by MCOs as well as under HIPP.

I have witnessed the extreme adversity endured by my severely disabled family member, particularly beginning with the inception of privatized Medicaid. Concerns occur DAILY regarding whether or not nursing services will be available. Imagine returning from the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics following extensive brain surgery, wondering if a nurse will show for a shift. Due to the severity of my family member's disability, in home care is necessary as facilities are not staffed or equipped for the level of care required. Nurse's are not paid a living wage and providers are not paid by MCOs. Taxpayers are paying hundreds of millions to out of state corporations that are running Medicaid into the ground.

On November 14, 2019, the Des Moines Register posted a quote by Senator Charles Grassley, "While the House is focused on impeachment, I'm going to be focused on the issues Iowans are talking about." Yet, my family received a response to our inquiry about the Medicaid mess which stated, [this is] "frankly beyond my sphere of influence."

Governor Kim Reynolds has stated, "We have a moral responsibility to think differently," this quote in connection with opportunities for inmates. Yet, will the Governor act on the moral responsibility to THINK DIFFERENTLY with respect to Iowa's most vulnerable? Minnesota Governor Tim Walz indicates Minnesota needs to invest to allow people with disabilities to stay in their own homes. He described the Minnesota budget as, "They are not fiscal documents, they are moral documents."

I urge you to listen, reflect, and take action on this moral problem on behalf of Iowa's most vulnerable. I know them. Eli, Evan, Jennifer, Matt, Shelley, Tucker, and thousands of others. I also encourage you to read Anna Landre's essay, America's Medicaid Trap, on the Disability Visibility Project website.

My family member's father/caregiver served YOU in county law enforcement. It is morally right for YOU to improve and provide Medicaid services to his family.

Now, I will close with the curt reply I received by a staff member of Governor Kim Reynold's office at the end of a telephone conversation regarding the Iowa Medicaid mess on August 24, 2018...

"Have a nice day."