

Our names are Todd and Julie Simanski and we are the parents of a super-hero. Olivia doesn't have the powers of most superheroes. She is only 15, she can't breathe on her own, walk, move, speak, and requires 24 hour care. However, she has more inner strength and courage than most people and has the power to light up the lives of anyone that experiences her smile. We are here to be her voice. Olivia, like many of the 560,000 vulnerable Iowans affected by this change in Medicaid, doesn't have wealth and/or political muscle. We are here to be the voice of the vulnerable, the disabled, the young, the old, the poor, the ones the State of Iowa should be guarding not gouging.

We've read the all the news articles about the proposed Medicaid change and fail to see how Iowans will be saving over 50 million dollars. Currently, Iowa is one of the most efficient states managing Medicaid. Consequently, if we are the most efficient, where does the savings come from? The only conclusion we can draw is that vital services will be cut. Frankly, we can't afford to have our services cut. So what would this mean to us? Olivia gets 16-20 hours of nursing care a day, she has expensive equipment and medical supplies, some of the medication she receives is \$2300 a month, and she sees a doctor about once a month. My husband and I are professionals and work full time. I receive health insurance with my job. However, without nursing hours, one of us would have to stay up with our daughter each night to monitor her alarms and one of us would most likely have to quit our jobs to care for her. Without a job, we may not be able to keep our health insurance and we certainly would not be able to afford all of Olivia's supplies and equipment. So cutting services may seem like a savings, but for our family and the state it would be a major loss. It simply does not add up.

We want the Privatization of Medicaid stopped. The current system is working. Arguments of increasing efficiency and saving money are baseless and have failed to be supported by any concrete evidence. When the Branstad administration is pressed to produce facts or logical backing, the administration claims that the data has been lost. The only thing this appears to be is political payback to Branstad's cronies on the backs of Iowans most vulnerable, the voiceless. We are here to be their voice.

We want an Iowa that protects our Superhero and other superheroes across the state. We want an Iowa that is transparent and that any changes in Medicaid are made on the basis of facts and not fabrications. We want an Iowa in which necessary services and medications for the most vulnerable continue to be accessed rather than abandoned. We want an Iowa that shelter rather than shun those with no political power or voice. We are here to be their voice.

The current Medicaid system allows our family a kind of normal. We have access to needed nursing hours, equipment, and medication. Despite given numerous opportunities, the Governor has failed miserably to support his claims of "savings." The only savings seem to come with a reduction of services and our family cannot function without those services. This was a plan hatched to provide payback for political support and not a plan to provide and protect Iowans. Privatization must be stopped. Our superhero depends upon it.

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