

# The Grouse House Gazette

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## A SIMPLE SOLUTION FOR OBAMACARE'S FUTURE

*"We're going to win so much. You're going to get tired of winning!" - Trump 2016*

After losing his first major political negotiation... Trump held one of his typically meandering "news conferences" where he not only blamed the Democrats but also strangely reached out to the opposition party for possible help in the future.

Keep in mind that Trump has never had any real ideology. It is always only about "winning"... his ego... and getting as much continuous press as possible.

He was a pro-choice Democrat only a few years ago, and I think he just wants to be on the side that's winning. He just found out that the GOP are "losers".

Within all of this horrid couple of weeks of debate... everyone seemed to be talking about everything except the two most important parts of the equation.

(1) The insurance companies that are responsible for the soaring premiums... co-payments... and costs in states where they have little or no competition. *(Please note that the CEO of United Healthcare [America's largest health insurance company] earned \$14.5 million in 2015 and the company made a profit of \$7.24 billion in 2016 (up from \$5.81 billion in 2015)).*

(2) The drug companies that are the most profitable businesses in America.

Whereas other countries have tight regulations on drug pricing... there are no such restrictions in America... where we pay a lot more than in other countries.

See chart below... (next page).

### American industries ranked by Forbes by profitability

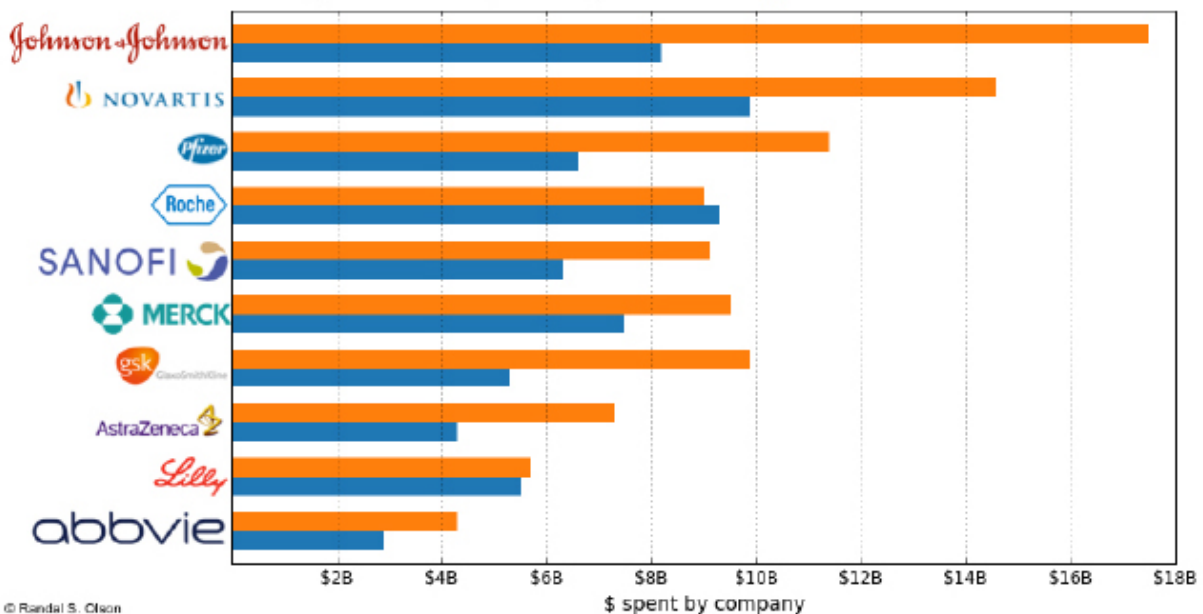


### Drug cost comparisons between countries...

| Drug (Cost per month)                 | Canada  | UK      | Spain   | Netherlands | US      |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
| <a href="#">Enbrel</a> (autoimmune)   | \$1,646 | \$1,117 | \$1,386 | \$1,509     | \$3,000 |
| <a href="#">Celebrex</a> (pain)       | \$51    | \$112   | \$164   | \$112       | \$330   |
| <a href="#">Copaxone</a> (MS)         | \$1,400 | \$862   | \$1,191 | \$1,190     | \$3,900 |
| <a href="#">Cymbalta</a> (depression) | \$110   | \$46    | \$71    | \$52        | \$240   |
| <a href="#">Gleevec</a> (leukemia)    | \$1,141 | \$2,697 | \$3,348 | \$3,321     | \$8,500 |
| Humira (arthritis)                    | \$1,950 | \$1,102 | \$1,498 | \$1,498     | \$3,049 |
| <a href="#">Nexium</a> (acid reflux)  | \$30    | \$42    | \$58    | \$23        | \$305   |

Pharmaceutical companies (health technology) also spend more on marketing than they do on research. Money for research also comes from the tax payers (though Trump is cutting that drastically in the coming future - click link). The marketing spend is hard to believe until you think about how many drug ads you see on television. The United States and New Zealand are the only two countries in the world where this advertising directly to consumers is permitted.

### Big Pharma Spending: Marketing vs. R&D



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Chart designed by Randal Olson from information from health research by Global Data

[Read more about this amazing world in my Gazette #124!!!](#)

But back to the skyrocketing insurance issue...

The reason that some state's premiums are going up and their insurance benefits are worse is because the insurance companies... happy with their huge profits... are simply pulling out of Obamacare and concentrating on the far easier to manage... and probably more profitable... "employee based" plans. Which leaves a lot of states with only one provider and totally screwed citizens.

Without regulations or competition... they can charge as much as they like.

So I propose a simple solution.

We take Medicare... which is all set up and working just fine... and extend it to people under the age of 65 as a "public option"... where consumers would *pay* for coverage (with built-in subsidies like those given for the private companies).

There would be an overall reasonable pricing scale to give private insurance companies competition in any states that have less than three insurance companies participating. And if all companies pull out... then the plan still covers all of the self-employed in the state. In a "perfect world" we would also greatly raise overall taxes as penalties on companies pulling out of states.

Could Trump... with the Democrats... and moderate Republicans... pull this off?

I'm obviously not an expert on this stuff... but it makes sense to me!

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