

Lack of coverage

On Sept. 22, there was an organized, nationwide protest of for-profit health insurers. In St. Louis a large, well-behaved crowd met in front of the WellPoint office building. WellPoint is the largest member of the Alliance Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. We heard speakers tell stories about being denied coverage or having coverage rescinded, and we were told of the high salary of Angela Braly, the president and CEO of WellPoint. Her 2008 total compensation was \$9.8 million. She has been quoted as saying, "We will not sacrifice profitability for membership. [WellPoint Inc. earnings conference call, April 23, 2008].

Two members who spoke at the rally tried to take a letter to Ms. Braly asking that she meet with them to discuss issues related to health insurance coverage. They were denied entry to the building.

Why was there no coverage (pun intended) of this event in the Post-Dispatch? Lack of coverage from our insurers is reprehensible. Lack of coverage from the Post-Dispatch is a disgrace.

Mary Clemons — Kirkwood

More affordable

Health insurance reform is moving forward, and the Senate Finance Committee this week has begun to work on amendments to the chairman's mark. We are closer than ever to establishing real changes to our health care system.

I am pleased to read that many of the proposed amendments to the Senate Finance bill deal with affordability issues. It is crucial that the end result of reform is more affordable health insurance for Americans. Premiums are rising faster than paychecks, and out-of-pocket expenses are becoming too much for American families. Making insurance more affordable not only would help cover the uninsured, but it also would bring economic security to families who have insurance.

I am encouraged to see that the process in Congress is moving forward, and I hope a meaningful, affordable health care bill will be signed by the president in the coming months.

Stacey Sickler — St. Louis