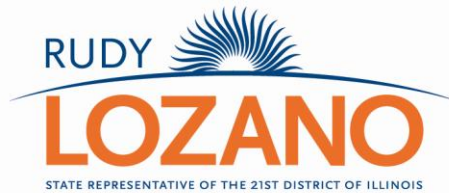


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## Health Care Access

Access to affordable quality health care is a fundamental human right. I have been a strong supporter of expanding and improving health access. As a community organizer, I have seen residents of the district suffer from inadequate medical resources and supports. Lack of affordable health care impacts all aspects of one's life. Skipping annual medical check-ups can lead to serious and costly health problems in the future. And enduring the rising costs of health care effects a family's ability to buy a home, maintain their savings and feed their families. As your State Representative, I will increase the affordability and availability of health care in our communities including advocating for more Medicaid funding, holding non-profit hospitals accountable for providing their fair share of charity care, expanding community and school-based health centers, and ensuring culturally and linguistically competent services for all Illinoisans. These investments will improve the health of our families, as well as create jobs in this growing industry.

As the economy has declined, the number of uninsured in Illinois has risen—and so have the costs. The percentage of uninsured Illinoisans grew from 10.9 in 1990 to 15 percent in 2009. Of the nearly 1.7 million Illinoisans uninsured in 2009—nearly half (44%) lived in the Chicago Metro area. Surprisingly, the state's highest uninsurance rates are not among the unemployed, but among the workforce. Employer-based health coverage in Illinois declined from 75% in the 1980s to 59% in the mid 2000s. As of 2009, 48% (800,000) of the state's 1.5 million workers (ages 16-64) are uninsured. And unfairly, Illinois' uninsured pay up to twice what insured patients pay for medical services.

My Policy Priorities Include:

Increasing Access and Coverage: While 1.7 million Illinoisans are uninsured, even those with insurance struggle with medical costs and coverage issues. Illinois' All Kids Program provides universal coverage for all Illinois' children—including undocumented kids. Universal health care does not yet exist for all Illinoisans. In Illinois, 2.8 million (22%) adults rely on Medicaid—a crucial public health coverage program. This program funds 45% of the state's community health centers, where one million residents receive direct health care. As your State Representative, I will advocate for full federal and state funding for Medicaid as well as support efforts for universal health care that will comprehensively cover all Illinoisans.

Community Health Resources: Not everyone goes to hospitals for their medical care. Community and school based health centers are crucial resources for families and communities. Having a place where doctors and nurses know your neighborhood and understand your family is critical to ensuring accessible and appropriate care. School-based health centers are an essential place for youth to access comprehensive health education and services. These local health resources are often a family's only, if not primary, health resource for preventative, pediatric, prenatal and other forms of care—especially for the un-and-under-insured. As your State Representative, I will invest in improving and expanding community and school based health centers in the districts, and throughout the state.

Culturally and Linguistically Competent Care: Communication between a doctor and their patient is crucial to providing quality care. Too many of the state's over 665,000 Latinos and 111,000 Asians who struggle speaking English do not have access to interpreters when receiving care. Studies have showed that a quarter of patients who need an interpreter but do not receive one do not understand their medication instructions. Other studies have found that language issues are as significant as the lack of insurance in using health services. However, Illinois' Medicaid program does not cover interpretation and translation services. As your State Representative, I will ensure translation is included in the state's Medicaid program, and that language access funding and standards are improved in Illinois.