

STATEMENT

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CONTACT:

Deborah Hamilton, Hamilton Strategies, 215.815.7716, 610.584.1096, ext. 102, or Beth Harrison, 610.584.1096, ext. 104,
Media@HamiltonStrategies.com

The First Shoe Drops: UnitedHealth Group Considers Obamacare Exit

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Just a few hours ago, [news broke that UnitedHealth Group](#), one of the country's largest health insurers, may cease offering coverage through Obamacare exchanges—a move that could have far-reaching effects on the already faltering government health care system.

According to [TheHill.com](#) and Fox News, “flagging enrollment and high-risk customers” are causing UnitedHealth Group to consider pulling out of the exchanges in 2017. UHG CEO Stephen J. Hemsley cited lower enrollment forecasts and a concern that the exchanges are increasingly taking on less healthy, and more costly, patients. In today's shareholder meeting, UHG also announced it would pull back on Obamacare marketing efforts for 2016.

Health care expert and patient freedom advocate Twila Brase, leader of *Citizens' Council for Health Freedom (CCHF, www.cchfreedom.org)*, has long cited the pitfalls of Obamacare as reasons why health plans will eventually find their inclusion no longer viable.

“This is a bellwether event,” Brase said. “UnitedHealth Group may be saying what the rest of the insurers are thinking but not yet saying. Two of the ‘3R’ risk-sharing and premium redistribution programs go away in 2017, so premiums will have to go still higher for 2017, making them even more painful than they are today.

“The GOP stopped the administration's illegal bailout attempt when the promised risk corridor program didn't take in sufficient dollars from health plans with healthy enrollees to send to health plan with unhealthy enrollees. That's because there weren't enough healthy people enrolled. Many insurers have suffered millions in losses from caring for all the costly patients who enrolled under Obamacare for treatment, and now they're stuck paying the bill.

“It's possible UHG's announcement is a political strategy,” Brase continued, “UnitedHealth may be trying to convince Congress to reconsider their opposition to the bailout. The reality of banning pre-existing condition exclusions is becoming evident: premiums are now too high for most of the healthy uninsured to pay, and insurers refuse to cover the costs government promised to cover through the mandate. Insurers counted on everyone being forced into insurance but the Supreme Court ruled the mandate unconstitutional, setting the stage for the administration's failed bailout attempt and what could now be maneuvering by health plans to get it back.”

Brase is the co-founder and president of ***Citizens' Council for Health Freedom (CCHF)***, www.cchfreedom.org, a patient-centered national health freedom organization based in St. Paul, Minn., existing to protect health care choices, individualized patient care, and medical and genetic privacy rights.

For more information about ***CCHF***, visit its web site at www.cchfreedom.org, its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cchfreedom or its Twitter feed, @CCHFFreedom.

Citizens' Council for Health Freedom, a patient-centered national health freedom organization based in St. Paul, Minn., exists to protect health care choices, individualized patient care, and medical and genetic privacy rights. ***CCHF*** sponsors the daily, 60-second radio feature, *Health Freedom Minute*, which airs on approximately 350 stations nationwide, including 200 on the American Family Radio Network and 100 on the Bott Radio Network. Listeners can learn more about the agenda behind health care initiatives and steps they can take to protect their health care choices, rights and privacy.

CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase, R.N., has been called one of the "100 Most Powerful People in Health Care" and one of "Minnesota's 100 Most Influential Health Care Leaders." A public health nurse, Brase has been interviewed by CNN, Fox News, Minnesota Public Radio, NBC Nightly News, NBC's Today Show, NPR, New York Public Radio, the Associated Press, Modern Healthcare, TIME, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Washington Times, among others. She is at the forefront of informing the public of crucial health issues, such as intrusive wellness and prevention initiatives in Obamacare, patient privacy, informed consent, the dangers of "evidence-based medicine" and the implications of state and federal health care reform.

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For more information or to interview Twila Brase, president and co-founder of *Citizens' Council for Health Freedom*, contact Deborah Hamilton at 215-815-7716 or 610-584-1096, or Beth Harrison at 610-584-1096, Media@HamiltonStrategies.com.