

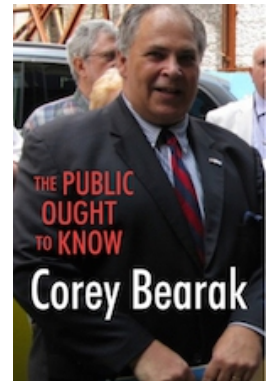
The Public Ought To Know

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By Corey Bearak

A single payer plan for NYS might just drive what we need for our nation. Part 1

Single payer health care makes so much sense. I researched the funding angles as a law student; my findings surprised me then (probably would not today): the existing government spending and tax expenditures covers the costs. Clearly what we know as Obamacare stands forth as a compromise – one undeserving of the attacks from opponents who probably cringe at any mention, let alone prospect of single payer. For one I always viewed the Affordable Care Act as but a step towards single payer, knowing politics rather than the (dollar) numbers, impeded a sound national health care plan. All the more we must welcome state initiatives that induce new momentum to drive our nation towards where it needs to be.



That explains in part the support of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) for a single payer health plan and the December 16 testimony by ATU Local No. 1179 President/ Business Agent John Lyons endorsing A.5389-A/S.2078-A, known as “The New York Health Bill.” The landmark, legislation introduced by Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard N. Gottfried and Senator Bill Perkins, represents what John called, “a crucial step towards a national single payer health care system and a more rational – and healthy – plan to ensure all New Yorkers receive adequate health care.”

As Chair of the ATU NYS Legislative Conference Board, John leads of coalition of public transit ATU locals across New York State and with a particular presence Brooklyn Queens and Staten Island, John described how ATU members interact with members of the public including many with inadequate coverage. His own local ATU 1179 represents bus operators, mechanics and supervisors who work from the Far Rockaway and JFK Depots of the MTA Bus division (former Green Bus lines). Other ATU locals (282, 580, 582, 726, 923, 1056, 1145, 1181, 1321, 1342, 1592 and 1625) represent public transit workers servicing communities across New York State. Public employee labor support for this legislation could prove crucial.

****Corey Bearak can be reached at StrategicPublicPolicy.com. Find his ebook, [The Public Ought To Know](#), at [Kindle](#), [Nook](#) and [Apple iBooks](#).***