

Pulse Takes the Day Off—and Reflects Upon a Historic Christmas

Category: Stories

written by Paul Gross | December 25, 2009

Paul Gross

Dear *Pulse* Readers,

We'd planned to take the day off, it being Christmas and all—and then a historic Christmas Eve Senate vote gave us second thoughts.

When the Obama administration arrived in Washington this past January it occurred to me that *Pulse* might have arrived on the scene too late. Once health reform came into being, “the heart of medicine” wouldn't ache quite so much. Maybe *Pulse* would become superfluous—like an offer of two aspirin after the headache's gone away.

I needn't have worried.

The healthcare reform bill that passed the Senate on Christmas Eve may be, as some say, a first step of historic proportions—a holiday gift for our nation, including some 31 million uninsured it promises to deliver access to. And yet one wonders, as others have pointed out, whether the real gift recipients won't be the same crowd who've made our health system so complicated, expensive and ineffective in the first place.

Is the current legislation a historic promise of health care for all? Or a guarantee of prosperity to those who've mucked things up so badly?

Or both?

One thing seems clear: the most meaningful health reform that we could have imagined—guided by notions of simplicity, of healthcare being a birthright rather than a commodity, of applying healthcare dollars judiciously where they will do the most good, and of showing profiteers the door—has not yet come to pass.

For many, this is a grave disappointment.

The silver lining for those who wish to lead a purposeful life is that much remains to be done. While our hoped-for day of rest has yet to arrive, the good news is that we're not going to grow bored.

And so, as long as our hearts beat fretfully, *Pulse* will continue to have a role—sharing the quiet truths that didn't make it to the Senate floor, drawing our attention to experiences and ideals that organized health care might one day embrace.

As this year draws to a close, we at *Pulse* wish all of you a restful and

rejuvenating holiday season. We look forward to hearing from you and sharing your stories and poems with the *Pulse* community in the year to come. And we gain strength from anticipating the journey ahead—together.

With warm regards,

Paul Gross
Editor-in-Chief