

UTAH HEALTH POLICY PROJECT

508 E South Temple, Suite 45; Salt Lake City, Utah 84102 www.healthpolicyproject.org



CONSUMERS FOR MEDICAID EXPANSION FIND THEIR VOICE AT GOVERNOR'S HEALTH REFORM SUMMIT

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Press Contact

Judi Hilman

Utah Health Policy Project

Judi: 801-870-3887 judi@healthpolicyproject.org

Salt Lake City – Despite the hefty ticket price (\$150) to attend the Governor's health reform summit (happening now) and health department officials' refusal to consider a proposal from UHPP to open up more affordable slots, consumers are finding their voice at the summit. Consumers like Emily...

Emily is on hand at the Summit now to speak with reporters. To arrange an interview, text or call Judi's cell: 801-870-3887. Emily is at the summit until 1:00 pm today (Grand America).

"When I'm not working as an employee with a company, I like to consider myself an entrepreneur who is pursuing the American Dream. Focused, determined, and driven, I did just that. I finished my undergrad and later got my MBA. I worked at several reputable companies, gained valuable experience, and in between all that even created some of my own. I have no dependents, but I am a caregiver for my elderly parents who live with me.

I had good health and good insurance my whole life until May 2009, when I was caught in a companywide layoff. In October of that same year, I was shocked with a diagnosis of breast cancer. I had surgery to remove the cancer, and it looked like they had got it all out, but my doctors recommended a 9 month treatment plan of chemo and radiation to try and ensure that the cancer wouldn't come back.

The next month in January 2010, my COBRA expired. I had applied for insurance but was denied due to a now pre-existing condition. I had never previously had a gap in coverage until that time but could not find out how to be eligible for any coverage. Every visit to the oncologist was hundreds of dollars, and the chemo and radiation were many thousands. Needless to say, I couldn't follow through with their treatment plan. At this time it seemed like the cancer was gone, so I didn't get the treatments and hoped for the best.

I would have been covered under the Medicaid expansion.

Just last month, I had a growth on my back which turned out to be a metastatic recurrence of the breast cancer. I am now trying again to get coverage to get the treatments that I desperately need to fight this disease. This might not have happened if I could have gotten the treatments I needed. My hope is that you will give your support to encourage the Governor and Legislature to allow the Medicaid expansion to pass."

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