

Contact Info: Opinion@startribune.com

Link to Article: <http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/health/209442181.html>

Email Subject: Letter to the Editor

Hi,

I'm submitting the following letter on behalf of the CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters, Janet Trautwein. Is there any chance you might be able to run it?

Best,
Kelly

Kelly Loussedes
National Association of Health Underwriters
202-595-3074

Dear Editor,

A recent article noted that one in five Minnesotans will shop for health insurance on their own in the state's new exchange next year (Minnesota health insurance exchange to cost \$58.1 million in 2014," May 29). To ensure that they make informed -- and financially savvy -- coverage choices, state policymakers must guarantee access to licensed, professional agents through the new marketplaces.

Consumers count on agents to educate them about their coverage options. A recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that 76 percent of agents spend at least some of their time investigating insurance options on behalf of their clients.^[1]

Nationally, 68 percent of small proprietorships rely on agents to help them purchase insurance plans.^[2] Without agents' expert counsel, many could end up with plans that don't suit their needs -- and cost more than they should.

Sincerely,

Janet Trautwein
Executive Vice President and CEO
National Association of Health Underwriters
1212 New York Ave. NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

^[1] <http://kaiserfamilyfoundation.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/8321-f.pdf>

^[2] <http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/upload/8321-F.pdf>