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The Economy Versus Human Health



What's the Price?

Feature Article

The Economy Vs. Human Health: What's the Price?

“The total spent on health care in 2007 was 2.4 trillion.”

In their valiant attempts to fix the economy, leaders must consider the most financially viable approach in the long term. Simply throwing money at failing auto and bank industries does not solve the problem and fails to achieve big picture thinking.

Americans live in a society in which industry is given a lot of clout. As a whole, industry is viewed as keeping families working and warding off poverty. Yet, a closer look reveals that this perception may be deceptive. Industry may be contributing greatly to poverty, home loss, and national financial ruin.

The total spent on health care in 2007 was 2.4 trillion, or nearly \$8,000 per person. Representing 17 percent of the gross domestic product, health care spending is expected to double to \$4.3 trillion by 2017.[1] This represents 20% of GDP. [1]

Currently, 1.5 million families lose their homes annually due to elevated health care expenses.[1]

A large percentage of health care costs may be attributed to environmental exposures

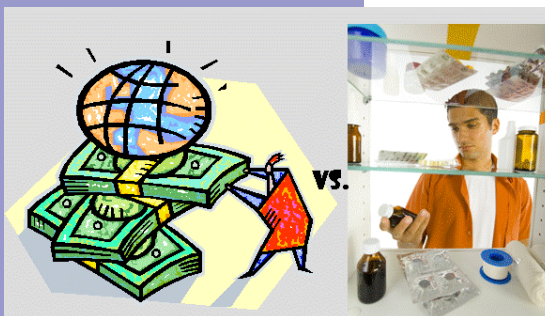
from industry manufacturing and products. Cumulative societal costs of exposure to toxic substances is calculated to be as high as \$793 billion dollars annually.[2] Neurodevelopment disorders have been linked to the environment and calculated to cost as much as \$167 billion annually. [3]

Manufacturing

Living in an industrialized society, a wide variety of hazardous contaminants are released to the environment from industrial sources which have the potential to impact human health. Some commonly used household products found in every home also contain toxic chemicals.

Industrial and consumer products which have been linked to health deterioration include:

- Bisphenol A
- Lead
- Formaldehyde
- Mercury
- Pesticides
- Herbicides
- Fungicides
- Fragrance Chemicals
- Flame Retardants
- Petroleum Products
- Plastics
- Children's Toys
- Dry Cleaning Chemicals
- Laundry Products



“The chemical industry often uses non-profit front groups with pleasant sounding names, neutral-appearing third party spokespeople, and science-for-hire studies to try to convince others of the safety of their products,” says Ann McCampbell, MD. “This helps promote the appearance of scientific objectivity, hide the biased and bottom-line driven agenda of the chemical industry.”[6]

Vaccines

The pharmaceutical companies have free reign to medicate the nation’s children with vaccine additives which enhance their profit while simultaneously appearing to giving rise to many chronic illnesses and deaths.

“It was the pharmaceutical industry that told Congress in 1982 that they were going to leave the nation without vaccines if they didn't get liability protection. but have opposed making it less difficult for vaccine victims to obtain federal compensation in the U.S. Court of Claims under a 1986 law that gave them liability protection.”[1] It is this liability protection that makes it impossible to sue manufacturers when a vaccine damages a child’s health.

There are few studies published which call into question vaccine safety and those which support vaccine efficacy are frequently misleading. Publication in prestigious journals is associated with industry funding, and this association is not explained by study quality or size.[1]

“Poor methodological quality was associated with a discrepancy between results and conclusions, and this in turn was associated with optimistic conclusions in non-government sponsored studies,” says Tom Jefferson, M.D., Ph.D.[4]

The vaccine industry scooped up \$10 billion in annual sales in 2005 and is estimated to reach

\$15 billion by the 2010.[5]

Balancing the Scales



Anticipated billions of dollars of industry profits seem inviting until the trillions of dollars of health care costs are considered. While the job industry can provide seems economically advantageous, people are becoming poisoned by those profits. The human body can stand up to just so much poison before it succumbs and all those profits are unreachable from a hospital bed when they are most direly needed.

How much more are American taxpayers willing to pour into failing industries when industry survival depends on declining human health which leads to future economic crisis?

For a little more cost and effort, products can be made safer. That little cost will pay off in the long run in saved health care costs.

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