

Award: Golden Bedpan - 2018
Recipient: Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL 13th)
Presenters: Claudia Lennhoff and Adani Sanchez

Claudia: It has been a lot of years – maybe 15 or so – since I have been the one to give the Golden Bedpan Award presentation. For people who are new to our Dinner, the Golden Bedpan Award is the Award that you do not want to get. It is like a raspberry award. It is a dishonor and a disgrace, and you really had to have earned it.

This year, the person who has most distinguished himself in disservice, specifically to his constituents, is Rep. Rodney Davis, Congressman for the 13th District of Illinois.

Adani: Hey Claudia! *comes to stage from seat* I've got some things to add to this presentation! Do you mind if I join you?

Claudia: Yeah, that would be great. So is this a Health Care Fact Chat, now?

Adani: I guess so!

Claudia: Okay, for those of you who may not know, Adani and I do these occasional videos called Health Care Fact Chats so that we can inform people about what's happening in the world of health care policy. They are featured on our website and on CCHCC's YouTube channel.

We did a lot of them in 2017 because of all the Congressional Republicans' efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and dismantle the Medicaid program. Our critiques were not based on partisanship, although these were highly partisan efforts. Our critiques and our analyses are always based on health care policy and whether the legislative proposals would serve the interests of improving health care policies and people's lives.

So, sure, Adani! Let's do this Golden Bedpan presentation like our Health Care Fact Chat!

Adani: Have you ever wondered about why Rep. Davis is just so bad on health care? I mean, he's just really, really bad. Over and over again, he made decisions and cast votes that would have really hurt his constituents in this district.

Claudia: Yeah, it's almost as if he doesn't understand health care policy or the effects that it has on his constituents. He says he has feelings and he says he cares about the people in the 13th district, but then his actions in DC reflect the opposite. It's almost like he has memorized talking points and has not thought out a comprehensive health care platform that would address the issues he has with the current healthcare system.

Adani: But he does a lot of photo opportunities and he says words about health care. So, what are his actual views on health care and what does he know about health care policy?

Claudia: He has stated many times that he wants affordable insurance for families and that the ACA has failed to reduce costs. He believes that some parts of the ACA are worth keeping like coverage for pre-existing conditions and keeping kids on their parents plan until age 26.

Adani: What!? That's strange, he supported the House health care bill, known as the AHCA, which would have reduced the amount of financial assistance some adults get on the health insurance marketplace which means they would have paid more in premiums. It also would have repealed the mandate to get insurance which means fewer people would join the plans and drive up costs for everyone.

Claudia: Yep, Rep. Davis has a funny way of showing his support for affordable health insurance. Medicaid is the most affordable health insurance program available and the AHCA would have made devastating cuts to it that would have led to millions of people losing coverage. Representative Davis has voted against sound health policy at every opportunity. That is why he is so deserving of the Golden Bedpan Award.

Adani: Have we tried talking to him about this?

Claudia: Yes! Many times! We sent emails and letters and made phone calls to his office, offering to meet with him and discuss health policy. Us and the Campaign

Urbana Public Health District offered to meet with him. We invited him to community forums.

He would never respond to us. I even offered to publicly debate him, if that's what he would prefer. No response.

We joined with hundreds of his constituents to attend crowded "office hours" events where we waited in the hot sun.

I even tried to engage him on Twitter. And many of our Fact Chat videos have us telling Rep. Davis to call us.

Adani: So, not only does he not understand health care policy, but it's like he doesn't even try to understand it! He's just determined to do what Paul Ryan wants him to do, no matter what's best for his constituents.

What has he done lately, after his votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act and dismantle the Medicaid program last summer?

Claudia: Well, if his health care positions weren't bad enough, he worked really hard to help pass the most recent tax bill which not only funds tax breaks for the wealthiest of the wealthy individuals, but also drastically cuts the tax rate for corporations – because, you know, corporations are people too.

Despite what Rep. Davis says, the Tax Cut Bill wasn't about helping the Middle Class. Under this bill, the top wealthiest 1% of Americans get about 34% of the benefits. The top 20% get about 70% of the benefits. Now, the top 10% own 73% of American Net Worth.

And the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) just came out with a report this week saying that the GOP's signature tax law that Rep. Davis championed, is projected to increase the national debt by \$1.9 trillion between 2018 and 2028.

In its 11-year estimate, CBO estimated that interest payments would account for \$582 billion of the \$1.9 trillion total deficit increase.

So now, Rep. Davis and others are saying that because of the national debt, we're going to have to cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security to make up for the deficit increase.

Adani: That would be terrible! That's really bad health care policy!

Cue Flat Rodney to come on stage to accept award.

Claudia: Right. For continuously voting to take people's health care away, reduce benefits, and kick people off Medicaid, and so much more, Rep. Rodney Davis has really distinguished himself as a most deserving recipient of our Golden Bedpan Award.

Rep. Davis declined to attend this event tonight to receive his award, but fortunately, we are joined by Flat Rodney, who is more responsive to his constituents.