

WAMC
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The Great Debate - Single Payer or Private Insurance
By Katie Britton

Students for a National Health Program at Albany Medical College presented The Great Debate at WAMC's The Linda on the evening of February 21st. Moderated by Dr. Kimberly Kilby, the debate featured Dr. Paul Song of the Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP) from California and Dr. Mitchell Heller of the Benjamin Rush Society from New York City as they argued for and against single payer vs. private insurance.

For an audio of the debate (55 minutes):

<http://wamc.org/post/great-debate-single-payer-or-private-insurance>

Comment by Don McCanne

The debate:

Resolved: The United States should switch to a single payer health care system

Speaking in favor is Paul Song, MD, representing Physicians for a National Health Program - an organization of physicians and others who advocate for "a universal, comprehensive single-payer national health program."

Speaking in opposition is Mitchell Heller, MD, representing the Benjamin Rush Society - an organization of physicians and others "who believe that the profession of medicine calls its practitioners to serve their patients, rather than the government."

"We as a society are defined by how we take care of the least amongst us." - Dr. Song

"It's hard to understand how command and control models like single payer still gain intellectual traction at all." - Dr. Heller

Although you should listen to the debate before hearing the results, many of you do not have the extra 55 minutes. So here is the vote:

Before the debate: 66% - For
5% - Against
29% - Undecided

After the debate: 80% - For
2% - Against
18% - Undecided