

Health/from A1

According to experts, there are two underlying reasons why the U.S. spends so much on health care: It uses expensive medical technology and prices for health care services and goods are higher than in other countries.

As a result, the U.S. spends more on health care than any other country, including those belonging to the OECD.

"The U.S. spends more money, but we definitely have worse health outcomes," said David (Squires, president of the Commonwealth Fund, a private foundation based in New York that carries out independent research on health care issues.

"It doesn't appear that people in the U.S. use more health care in general. We go to the doctor less often than people in other countries and get hospitalized less, so it's not like we are making greater use, but we are paying more for the things we do use," he said.

Despite investing heavily in health care, Americans live shorter

lives than people in 30 other countries, data from the World Health Organization showed. On average, life expectancy in the U.S. is 79.3 years, the lowest rate among other advanced economies such as Switzerland, Australia and Canada.

Life expectancy is one way experts measure the effectiveness of a health care system, and experts say the United States' poor ranking, compared with other Western nations, indicates a weak health care system.

"This is a troubling statistic at just how poor American health is compared to other countries that have similar economic status," Squires said.

When it comes to health care access, in many ways the U.S. trails behind other countries, including access to health insurance.

According to 2015 data from the OECD, the U.S. has a higher percentage of people who go without health insurance than at least 12 other comparable countries.

Although no two countries have the exact same health care system, many nations on the list

— such as Sweden, Japan and the Netherlands — provide their residents with a universal health care insurance plan. Subsequently, nearly 100 percent of the population from these countries have their health care needs covered. That means, in exchange for free health care, many governments play an active role in creating the variety of systems to help fund it.

The U.S. is the only wealthy country without universal coverage. The idea of creating a health care system based on principles of universal coverage is one of the main points of contention in the current U.S. health care debate, Squires said.

After President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law in 2010, it succeeded in providing insurance to millions of people. But while other countries have normalized such principles, experts said many Republicans are against the idea.

In 2013, more people died in the U.S. from preventable diseases or complications than those in 12 other high-income countries, according to

data from the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, a health policy organization with offices across Europe.

For every 1,000 people who died in the U.S. before age 75, 112 people died from complications or conditions that could have been avoided with timely and effective care.

This indicator, known as mortality amenable to health care, measures the number of preventable deaths had adequate medical care been available. By tracking this number over time, health experts can monitor both setbacks and improvements in health care systems.

By studying the barometer over time, health experts found that the U.S. has continuously struggled to keep up with other countries in this measure. According to the Peterson-Kaiser Health System Tracker, although the rate has been decreasing globally since at least 1982, more people still die in the U.S. from preventable diseases or complications than in other countries with similar advanced economies.

Programs/

from A1

Trump unveiled his \$4.1 trillion budget plan in March, pledging to "reduce the federal government to redefine its proper role and promote efficiency."

But in the House, where all 435 members face voters next fall, budget legislation has far more money than Trump had sought for a host of programs. The spending bill for agriculture contains \$4.64 billion beyond what Trump requested, an increase of about 30 percent. For interior and the environment, the bump was \$4.3 billion, or 16 percent. For transportation, housing and urban development, the committee approved \$8.6 billion, about 18 percent more than the budget request.

"There's that old saying in Washington that the president proposes and Congress disposes," said Steve Ellis, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense, a nonpartisan fiscal watchdog.

Indeed, after many House and Senate Republicans complained to Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney in hearings about the effect of some of Trump's cuts, congressional budget-writers quickly made sure they don't happen.

For example, instead of slashing the Appalachian Regional Commission, the House Appropriations Committee last week approved \$130 million for the independent agency, created 52 years ago, that helps fund infrastructure and job-training projects in Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina, Missouri, Mississippi, Pennsylvania and other Appalachian states that Trump won in 2016.

Lawmakers including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., to Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., vowed that doing away with the ARC wasn't going to happen.

"I am very proud that the House Appropriations Committee approved a bill that includes important funding for the ARC, an organization that does a great deal of good in East Tennessee and rural Appalachia," Roe said.

Even agencies and programs conservative Republicans purport to dislike are avoiding the Capitol ax. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting has been on the list of programs many conservatives and Republicans have wanted to defund since Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., was House Speaker in the

1990s. Trump wants it off the federal books, too, but House appropriators instead included \$445 million for the agency.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities have also been favorite conservative targets, and got a death sentence in Trump's budget plan. That didn't stop the House Appropriations Committee from approving \$145 million for each endowment last week with plenty of Republican help.

"Throughout this year, we've seen some of the Republican members of that committee saying that they were working hard to make sure that the NEA would be receiving significant funding and certainly rejecting the administration's termination proposal," said Narric Rome, vice president for government affairs for the Americans for the Arts, an advocacy group.

All this still enrages plenty of conservatives.

"The problem with the Republicans is that so many of them aren't team players," said Chris Edwards, director of tax policies studies at the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute and editor of DownsizingGovernment.org. "They're parochial or, with appropriators, it's just a single-minded devotion to increase spending on the programs that they fund."

Edwards said he was stunned when leading Republicans railed against Trump's budget plan to eliminate the Community Block Grant Development program, which allocates funds initiatives from affordable housing to after-school programs.

House appropriators approved \$2.9 billion for CDBG, \$100 million less than its Fiscal 2017 funding level.

"Appropriators and other Republican congressmen, they love to give speeches about fiscal responsibility, they love to complain how Obama was a big spender, but now's the real test," he said. "Trump has given them the way forward here with some reasonable cuts. Can they rise above their parochial interests and do something that's good for the overall budget here?"

Other budget-watchers note that the real money issues aren't even being addressed. Marc Goldwein, senior vice president and senior policy director for the nonpartisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, said that even Trump's cuts ignore the fastest growing parts of the federal budget, entitlements like Social Security and Medicare.

Sanctions/from A1

Passage of the bill, which could occur before Congress breaks for the August recess, puts Congress on a possible collision course with Trump. The White House had objected to a key section of the bill that would mandate a congressional review if Trump attempted to ease or end the sanctions against Moscow. But if Trump were to veto the bill, he risks sparking an outcry from Republicans and Democrats and having his decision overturned.

The sanctions review was included in the bill because of wariness among lawmakers from both parties over Trump's affinity for Putin.

The precise mechanics of how involved House Democrats would be in the review process had been a key sticking point, but Hoyer said he was pleased with the outcome.

"The legislation ensures that both the majority and minority are able to exercise our oversight role over the administration's implementation of sanctions," Hoyer said.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer called the sanctions legislation "strong" and he expected the legislation to be passed promptly.

"Given the many transgressions of Russia, and President Trump's seeming inability to deal with them, a strong sanctions bill such as the one Democrats and Republicans have just agreed to is essential," said Schumer, D-N.Y.

Early Saturday morning, House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy posted a legislative business schedule that shows the sanctions bill will be considered Tuesday. McCarthy

had pushed to add the North Korea sanctions to the package. The House had overwhelmingly passed legislation in May to hit Pyongyang with additional economic sanctions, but the Senate had yet to take up the bill.

The Senate last month passed sanctions legislation that targeted only Russia and Iran. Congressional aides said there may be resistance among Senate Republicans to adding the North Korea penalties, but it remained unclear whether those concerns would further stall the legislation. The aides were not authorized to speak publicly and requested anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

"A nearly united Congress is poised to send President Putin a clear message on behalf of the American people and our allies, and we need President Trump to help us deliver that message," said Sen. Ben Cardin of Maryland, the top ranking Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee.

The House and Senate negotiators addressed concerns voiced by American oil and natural gas companies that sanctions specific to Russia's energy sector could backfire on them to Moscow's benefit. The bill raises the threshold for when U.S. firms would be prohibited from being part of energy projects that also included Russian businesses.

Although there is widespread support for the legislation, the bill stalled after it cleared the Senate over constitutional questions and bickering over technical details. In particular, House Democrats charged that GOP leaders had cut them out of the congressional review that would be triggered if

Trump proposed to terminate or suspend the Russia sanctions. But Republicans rejected the complaint and blamed Democrats for holding the bill up.

The review requirement in the sanctions bill is styled after 2015 legislation pushed by Republicans and approved in the Senate that gave Congress a vote on whether then-President Barack Obama could lift sanctions against Iran. That measure reflected Republican complaints that Obama had overstepped the power of the presidency and needed to be checked by Congress.

According to the bill, Trump is required to send Congress a report explaining why he wants to suspend or terminate a particular set of sanctions. Lawmakers would then have 30 days to decide whether to allow the move or reject it.

The North Korea sanctions bill included in the package cleared the House by a 419-1 vote and House Republicans became frustrated the Senate didn't move quickly on the measure given the vast bipartisan support it received. The measure bars ships owned by North Korea or by countries that refuse to comply with U.N. resolutions against it from operating in American waters or docking at U.S. ports. Goods produced by North Korea's forced labor would be prohibited from entering the U.S.

The sanctions package imposes mandatory penalties on people involved in Iran's ballistic missile program and anyone who does business with them. The measure would apply terrorism sanctions to the country's Revolutionary Guards and enforce an arms embargo.

Davis/from A1

Allison talked about how her dad supported her in "every silly old thing" she did.

"I could ask him to do anything for me," she said. "He was really a pushover."

He coached her softball team when she was a child, replaced her stolen bicycle when she was in college and bought her a dog at a garage sale several years ago. Most of all, she recalled what he gave of himself.

"He just gave us so much time," she said.

Chuck Davis was born and raised in Sedro-Woolley with his brother Norm and sisters Marilyn, Margery and Marlene. He went to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and later to law school at the University of Washington to become a maritime attorney.

He practiced in Seattle but would often return to Skagit County to take his family camping on Samish Island. They moved there permanently in 2000. Seventeen years later, at 73, he had yet to fully retire. Marlene Schuck recalled that he would take business calls while fishing in the Samish River. Fishing and boating were a

huge part of Chuck Davis' life, and neighbors said he took it upon himself to catch the fish — and cook it — for the community potluck dinners the Samish Island neighbors hold three times a year.

This year, they're putting out the word to others to save fish for the September event, which they plan to hold in his honor.

Chuck Davis served as a member and previously as president of their local island community board and always urged others to participate, said friend and fellow board member Jerry Sells.

"He had a way of expressing himself without taking over," Sells said. "He was very persuasive. It's rare anyone disagreed with him."

Always smiling and with a keen sense of humor, Sells said Chuck Davis could have been mayor if Samish Island had such a thing, but "Mr. Samish Island would be a good title for him."

Most notably, Chuck Davis took care of things for people and his community.

Neighbor Laurie Lundgren said that when her husband had surgery near the holidays a decade ago, Chuck Davis called and told her to bring out the outdoor lights — he was going to put them up just the way she

wanted them.

Her husband Doug said Chuck Davis was the island's unofficial first responder.

When a recent storm caused property damage at 18 area homes, Chuck Davis coordinated a unified effort, bringing in a civil engineer to work with all the properties at once.

"He spent I don't know how much time coordinating that," Doug Lundgren said.

Marlene Schuck said that when her husband Mark was coming home from the hospital, they arrived earlier than expected to find Chuck Davis cleaning the house's windows that look out over the bay.

He hadn't wanted them to know he was doing it, but told her that Mark would need clean windows to look out of while he recovered, she said.

Even on the water, Chuck Davis was looking out for others.

Nurith St. Pierre said when she and her partner went to pull crab pots, he would come over to make sure they were OK.

"You didn't have to ask him," she said. "It's such a loss for everybody."

Many days, he could be found walking his dogs through the neighborhood, picking up any trash he found, neighbors said. "The man is irreplaceable.

He did so many things for this community," said neighbor Ken Wood.

Marlene Schuck said the community support will help the family move forward, but she knows it will be a tough road ahead because beyond the loss of Chuck Davis, there is also the situation with his son, Lane.

She said her brother would want to know that this tragedy could help someone else.

"If there's any good that can come out of this, it's a hope that parents of children with issues need to reach out to others and find advocacy,"



PHOTO PROVIDED BY FAMILY

Chuck Davis' third grandchild Charlotte Marguerite Davis was born Friday. The name Charlotte is in honor of her grandfather.