



# EDWARD J. KRESS DISTRICT 3

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COMMITTEE MEMBER OF:  
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& HOUSING  
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## **Council Member Kress Holds Insurance Committee Meeting on UPMC / Highmark**

The Insurance Committee of Allegheny County Council yesterday held its inaugural meeting with officials from UPMC and Highmark to discuss the consent decrees executed June 27, 2014. Committee Chair Kress heard testimony on the interpretation of the consent decrees by both UPMC and Highmark regarding the termination of contract that enabled Highmark-insured individuals to stay within network in UPMC facilities. Those in attendance included Tom McGough Jr., Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer for UPMC, Tom Fitzpatrick, Senior Vice President of Provider Contracting and Relations for Highmark, and Dr. Dennis Gabos, a UPMC physician.

The given testimony stated that seniors with Highmark insurance products may not be safe from out-of-network prices from UPMC physicians despite the consent decree's protection. Insurance Committee witnesses stated that UPMC and Highmark have failed to come to an agreement regarding almost 700 UPMC physicians. Insurance Committee Chair Kress stated "I find that this is unacceptable behavior and that immediate action must be taken to clarify the consent decree and protect our region's seniors regarding their affordable healthcare options."

Insurance Committee Chair Kress, Council President DeFazio and Council Member Palmiere jointly stated "We are urging the Governor, the Pennsylvania Departments of Insurance and Health, and the Attorney General to intervene in this dispute. UPMC and Highmark must come to an accord regarding our seniors, in-network emergency room follow up care, continuity of care protections, and out-of-network billing. The residents of Allegheny County need to know how this will affect their ability to access affordable healthcare options." Committee Chair Kress went on to state his concern regarding both organizations joint \$4,000,000 contribution to a Consumer Education Fund, ordered by the consent decrees, "I would like to know how these contributions are being spent, and how it is educating and benefitting our residents."

For more information, please contact Council Member Ed Kress at 412-350-6535.

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