

Two years ago, I was honored to serve as Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules and bring the historic Affordable Care Act to the House Floor. Seeing health care reform pass through Congress and be signed into law was one of the proudest moments of my 25 years in Congress.

The value of the law can be seen in the personal stories of New Yorkers and Americans who now have safe and affordable access to health care.

The Mary M. Gooley Hemophilia Center in Rochester sees living proof of the people helped by the Affordable Care Act every day. The doctors at the center recently shared a story of one such patient:

There is an 8-year-old boy from Rochester with Severe Hemophilia A. This is a lifelong, chronic bleeding disorder with no present cure. He is prone to spontaneous internal bleeding and must intravenously infuse medicine at home three times a week. This medicine is terribly expensive, costing several thousand dollars per week – annually his treatment costs over \$100,000 per year. If he does not take this medicine regularly, he would surely bleed into his joints, causing crippling joint damage and lifelong disability.

He lives with his single mother and an older sister. His mother works very hard, holding down a full-time factory job, but the family does struggle financially. There is no way that his mother could ever afford to pay for her son's life-saving medicine without good, comprehensive insurance coverage.

Like so many other families who struggle with the costs of Hemophilia, his mother used to worry about facing annual and lifetime caps with her family's medical insurance. Also, the threat of losing her job and insurance benefits brought ongoing concern that her son would be medically discriminated against, due to his preexisting medical condition.

Thankfully, the Affordable Care Act has banned pre-existing condition discrimination so this family can rely upon consistent, continuous medical care. In addition, the Affordable Care Act, has removed annual and lifetime insurance caps so this mother can get her son's medicine for

as long as he needs it without risk of financial devastation.

This is a prime example of a strong, working mother trying to raise her family the right way and now not having to worry about something out of their control diminishing their ability to earn and live the American Dream.

Kim Gibson is another example of the Affordable Care Act making a difference in the lives of our Rochester neighbors. The group Health Care For All New York also recently shared the story of Kim's health care struggles and how the Affordable Care Act has helped. They write:

Kim is a single mother of two from Rochester. When her son was 16, he suffered a back injury and underwent surgery. Soon after Kim's son graduated high school, the Gibson family was faced with a dilemma. If Kim's son went to college full-time Kim could keep him on her health insurance and pay for his follow-up care. But if Kim's son instead pursued a career, his back problems could be considered a "pre-existing condition", and prevent him from obtaining his own health insurance as a working adult.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Kim's son can pursue a career without fear of being denied needed health care. Thanks to the new law, Kim's son can be on her health insurance plan without being enrolled in school, and when he goes to purchase his own health insurance, he can rest easy, knowing that he will not be denied insurance because of a "pre-existing condition". In short, Kim and her son no longer have to choose between pursuing a career and receiving medical care.

Says Kim, "He is a painter now, and I know that he's going to do fine. He is a very hard worker. And now that he can stay on my insurance I am much more at ease."

From helping children pursue their professional and personal dreams, to providing life saving care for the youngest and most vulnerable of our citizens, the Affordable Care Act is giving Americans more affordable and more secure access to health care every day. I am proud to celebrate the 2nd Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act, and defend the rights of New Yorker's to access safer, more secure health care.