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Legislation must help Blues evolve

I'm writing about individual health insurance reform as a physician and as a concerned resident of Michigan.

In my medical practice, I have worked to improve the health of my patients. Through my involvement with various professional organizations, I worked with others, such as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, to improve the quality of health care in the state.

Over the years, there have been tremendous changes in medical technology, treatment methods and many other aspects of health care. It's important that we not only keep up with these changes, but that we also look ahead. And it's important that we focus on the main issue: helping people.

I mentioned that I've worked closely with the Blues on health matters. That's not to say that we always agree. But I do know and understand that the Blues play a very special role in this state. The Blues work with physicians and hospitals to enhance health care for everyone, improving patient care and sharing best practices, funding uncompensated care for hospitals. It's this kind of collaboration that makes Michigan doctors and hospitals some of the finest in the country.

The Michigan Legislature has the difficult task of updating an idea from the 1930s to fit the needs of Michigan in the 21st century. This will require some amendments to the current statutes to allow the Blues to compete in the individual market, assure the benefits of competition and maintain Michigan's low-cost health insurance. I applaud the deliberative approach taken by the Michigan Senate and am confident that it will make certain that the legislation assures continuation of the excellent service provided by the Blues to the residents of Michigan.

Dr. Peter B. Ajluni

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