

I support HF 3889 in requiring health insurance products to cover medically necessary feeding tube nutrition because of my recent personal experience that left me with no choice but to have a feeding tube surgically placed for me to stay alive.

What happened to me can happen to you or to someone you care about: I had to have emergency bowel obstruction surgery on December 15, 2023. Subsequent complications included gastroparesis — a paralyzed stomach. A month later, doctors surgically inserted two tubes, one to reduce vomiting by allowing bile from my stomach to drain and one into my jejunum for pumping in prepared formula for nutrition.

It never occurred to me that my insurance company might not cover feeding tube nutrition when I consented to the surgery. No doctor suggested I find out if insurance covered prepared nutrition before telling me I needed a feeding tube which meant I also required PREPARED “predigested” food formula sold in 250 ml boxes to stay alive.

A patient facing feeding tube surgery must make a life or death decision at that moment. Having to research whether or not your insurance company covers medically necessary nutrition should not be required before patients consent to life saving surgery.

It never occurred to me that insurance companies could refuse to cover medically necessary nutrition. I was lucky to be on Medicare and it was covered, But insurance companies can deny feeding tube nutrition by declaring it “groceries” unless HF 3889 becomes law.