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Last month, testimony in front of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation by a former health insurance insider named Wendell Potter made news even before it occurred: [CBS NEWS](#) headlined: "[Cigna Whistleblower to Testify.](#)" After Potter's testimony the industry scrambled to do damage control: "[Insurers defend rescissions, take heat for lack of transparency.](#)"

In his first extended television interview since leaving the health insurance industry, Wendell Potter tells Bill Moyers why he left his successful career as the head of Public Relations for CIGNA, one of the nation's largest insurers, and decided to speak out against the industry. "I didn't intend to [speak out], until it became really clear to me that the industry is resorting to the same tactics they've used over the years, and particularly back in the early '90s, when they were leading the effort to kill the Clinton plan."

Potter began his trip from health care spokesperson to reform advocate while back home in Tennessee. Potter attended a "[health care expedition,](#)" a makeshift health clinic set up at a fairgrounds, and he tells Bill Moyers, "It was absolutely stunning. When I walked through the fairground gates, I saw hundreds of people lined up, in the rain. It was raining that day. Lined up, waiting to get care, in animal stalls. Animal stalls."

Looking back over his long career, Potter sees an industry corrupted by Wall Street expectations and greed. According to Potter, insurers have every incentive to deny coverage — every dollar they don't pay out to a claim is a dollar they can add to their profits, and Wall Street investors demand they pay out less every year. Under these conditions, Potter says, "You don't think about individual people. You think about the numbers, and whether or not you're going to meet Wall Street's expectations."

[You can view Wendel Potter's congressional testimony online or read the text.](#)

[You can learn more about Remote Area Medical, the organization that put on the "health care expedition" here.](#)

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