



## How City of Natchez Elected Officials Have Failed the Public: Employee Benefit—Health Insurance

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April 15, 2019 (Revised April 25, 2019)

**Employees’ Petition Ignored; Unresolved Claims.** Health insurance coverage is an employee benefit provided through the City of Natchez. The City elected officials failed to act on City employees’ petition to City to change the City’s health insurance coverage with L.S. & Associates in Southaven back to Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan.<sup>1</sup> City employees describe that in order to have their claims paid, they would have to “pull strings” to get the attention of LS & Associates. After complaints of numerous unresolved, unpaid claims, according to the Natchez Democrat,<sup>2</sup> the City finally authorized the City Attorney to “propose a payment method for the claims pending consultation with the insurance brokers”, but this came only after City employees were exposed to worries about their claims. On information, claims are still outstanding. The L.S. & Associates plan includes an unregulated insurance product called “Medi-Hop.”

**Employees Report.** Firefighters describe the mold problem in fire stations. One firefighter reports that he has not been sick and suffering with sinus problems since he has been away from Station 1 on Main Street and Station 2 on Vaughn Drive. A firefighter also reports that it has been nearly 2 years since he first began efforts to get his health insurance bills paid. Those bills, once in excess of \$3,500.00 have now been whittled down to approximately \$2,400.00, but he still has an additional bill in the amount of \$1,200.00 awaiting payment.

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<sup>1</sup> See The Natchez Democrat “City health insurance debate devolves into accusations” September 14, 2016 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2016/09/14/city-health-insurance-debate-devolves-into-accusations/>; “City employees sign petition for to (sic) change health insurance” September 27, 2016 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2016/09/27/city-employees-sign-petition-for-new-health-insurance/>; “Divided board Oks City insurance” August 24, 2017 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2017/08/24/divided-board-oks-city-insurance/>; “Vote to rescind health insurance contract fails” September 28, 2016 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2016/09/28/vote-to-rescind-health-insurance-contract-fails/>; “Aldermen meet to discuss insurance” September 30, 2016 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2016/09/30/aldermen-meet-to-discuss-insurance/>; “City votes to retain current

insurance provider without considering other proposals” 2017/08/16 <https://m.natchezdemocrat.com/2017/08/16/city-votes-to-retain-current-insurance-provider-without-considering-other-proposals/>; “City needs to reconsider insurance decision” August 17, 2017 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2017/08/17/city-needs-to-reconsider-insurance-decision/>; “Insurance renewal suspicious” August 25, 2017 <https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2017/08/25/insurance-renewal-suspicious/>.

<sup>2</sup> City of Natchez agrees to finance police squad cars <https://m.natchezdemocrat.com/2019/03/20/city-of-natchez-agrees-to-finance-police-squad-cars/>

