

24

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Dear Joshua,

There is a rational answer and a historical one. As usual the truth is historical. I came to health policy unburdened by any prior acquaintance. I had been asked to explain the increase in medical costs but I soon concluded this was well known. Indeed, the medical literature was unlike any I had read in social science in that there was a mountain of splendid material. Coming to grips with this material, somehow simplifying it, I discovered was a major roadblock to thinking. So I made it my task not to invent anything new, but to make what was already known simpler and more vivid. Soon I realized that if I took notes I would end up using them and that this would run directly counter to my purpose. I did not want to produce a rambling book. In a word I took no notes and wrote the enclosed paper. I did read a variety of material that included various estimates and made my own judgement. It could have been 20% or 30%, but it would not have been higher by any authority I consulted, only, alas, I cannot remember which. No doubt many have wondered, but you are the first to ask.

Sincerely,

Aaron Wildavsky 

Enc.

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