

## Statistics to die for

Health researchers rank the U.S. last among industrialized nations in forestalling preventable deaths. This is a metric that should be considered in the current historic debate about the state of the American health care industry.

We are ranked below Ireland, Portugal, the socialized medical systems of Canada, Britain,

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Japan, Germany, Norway and Sweden, to mention just a few on the list. The most successful in this category is France.

Probably the most disturbing development in this evaluation of how health systems intervene to counter preventable deaths is that the U.S. has slipped from 15th to 19th over the past decade, a period of time we have been involved in spending hundreds of billions of dollars in our wars of empire.

I guess the only comfort we can take from this appalling situation is that we are at rock bottom and have no place to go but up. Perhaps back up to 15th?

I don't think we can take any solace from the fact that France sits squarely on top of this list. Perhaps Congressman Joe Wilson can provide a fleeting modicum of relief by declaring this is a "lie," too?

**JERRY McKNIGHT**  
Frederick

## Gag reflex

How many folk who the Democrats claim can't afford health care spend hundreds each month on iPhones, high-speed Internet, HD cable, expensive cars, going out to dinner far too much, unrestrained spending on