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Letters to the editor: City Edition

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CalPERS should target health care providers

Regarding “Denial at CalPERS / Board again puts unions ahead of taxpayers” (Editorial, June 26) and “Days of reckoning / CalPERS may face up to reality – at long last” (Editorial, June 20):

As president of the California State Employees Association, I can say we are facing a national crisis in health care. Costs are skyrocketing for everyone, with no end in sight. We should be encouraging CalPERS to take action against those who really are responsible for outrageous health care costs – doctors, hospitals, drug manufacturers and insurance companies. Making public employees pay more out-of-pocket will not reduce health care costs.

CalPERS is the nation's third-largest purchaser of health care coverage, behind only the federal government and General Motors. Surely it has the resources and the economic clout to impact the behavior of the health care providers who set the prices. CalPERS has the capability of tracking which health care providers are charging exorbitant fees and taking steps to cut them out of the program.

We want to help CalPERS control health care costs. But trying to push through benefit reductions that don't address the real problem is not the answer.

J.J. JELINCIC
Sacramento