During the early morning hours of July 26, 2006, I was alone and unconscious in the driver’s seat of a Subaru that was buried in the woods of rural Maine. It was the summer before my senior year at Brandeis University, and I had been driving to my parent’s house in Acton, Maine when I lost control of the car and careened into the woods.

I was in that car for hours before someone found me. A LifeFlight helicopter transported me to Maine Medical Center where I remained in a coma for three weeks, and spent two additional weeks a minimally conscious state.

I was diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury. The doctors told my parents that I had a ten percent chance of functional recovery.

After five weeks at Maine Medical Center, I was transferred to Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital in Massachusetts for inpatient care. This intensive care, provided at a critical juncture in my recovery, was made possible by my insurance carrier, Harvard Pilgrim, which covered 100 days of inpatient therapy and helped my parents navigate the process of finding a rehab provider.

At Braintree I received around the clock care from Dr. Katz and dedicated neurologists and therapists who put me through rigorous physical, occupational, and speech therapy sessions. The case manager at Harvard Pilgrim explained to my mom that it made sense to cover the expensive inpatient care in order to improve my chances for functional recovery, which meant fewer medical expenses in the future.

My progress was slow at first, but gradually I began making eye contact with my parents and responding to questions from my therapists. After 100 days of inpatient rehab, I was talking, and even laughing, with my friends and family.

After Braintree, I moved into my parent’s house, but continued outpatient therapy four days a week at Portsmouth Regional Hospital, which was also covered by my insurance plan. After a year of medical care in three different hospitals, and in three different states, my family didn't pay any out-of-pocket expenses. Instead of worrying about money, my parents could focus on my recovery.

A year after my accident, I returned to Brandeis University and finished my degree. I traveled to China and filmed a documentary. I moved to Boston and got a job. I currently work at the Ivy Street School, helping students with brain injuries receive the cognitive therapy they need to live with their injury.

None of this would have been possible without the therapy made available to me during every step of my recovery. It’s unlikely I would be standing before you today without the medical care I received during the most challenging time in my life, all of which was made possible through the comprehensive coverage of my insurance provider.

Thank you for your time.