

Health Care Reform I Support

There is no question that our health care system needs immediate and effective reform. Unfortunately, in the 111th Congress, President Obama, Nancy Pelosi, and Harry Reid crafted and passed a misguided health care law that both carries a deficit impact of trillions in dollars in new spending and created a brand new open-ended health care entitlement that will – unless repealed – exacerbate the spiraling cost of health care, explode our deficit and debt, and forever alter the relationship between the government and the American people. I will address the numerous reasons I opposed and continue to oppose this health care law at the bottom of this page.

However, in the 112th Congress, my



colleagues and I will continue to put forth legislation that we believe will effectively and positively reform health care for all Americans. Last year, I joined with Congressmen Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Devin Nunes (R-CA) in supporting a reform measure called the Patient's Choice Act. This plan's tenants are directionally opposite to the current health care law. Instead of putting government in charge of the system, this plan largely removes the failed portions of government involvement, and puts each individual in charge of their own health care plan and decisions. Here are some bullet points on this plan:

- The plan eliminates the employer deduction for health insurance and the system of direct payment of health costs under Medicare and Medicaid, and replaces them with a \$2,300 refundable tax credit per individual which must be used for health care costs. Therefore, everyone, whether they are young, senior citizens, or indigent, will be covered under a private plan of their own choosing. And you no longer have to get the plan from your employer, but will have a number of options to keep the same plan as you move from job to job. Senior plans

would be further subsidized by the Medicare system but still allowed to choose their own plan.

- Currently as a Californian, you can only buy a health insurance plan approved by the state of California. Under the Patient's Choice Act, you would be free to pick from any of the over 1,300 medical insurance plans offered around the country. State based insurance exchanges will make sure that you cannot be cancelled for illness, and that pre-existing conditions will not interfere with our choices, in the same way that fire insurance is available to those who live in high fire risk areas today.

- This plan will allow unlimited contributions to a health savings account, so that you can save for your own health care costs on a pre-tax basis.

- Litigation costs are a huge driver of medical costs. This bill would replace the court system with state based dispute resolution mechanisms for most claims, thereby saving a great deal of money in the system.

- Creates transparency through a public/private partnership to disclose cost, quality, and outcomes of various plans and providers.

- It also instills accountability into existing federal wellness and prevention programs to encourage more disease prevention activities and thereby lower costs.

- This bill will cost a grand total of \$0 and will increase taxes by \$0. It is revenue and cost neutral to the current system.

Current Health Care Law: Government Takeover of Health Care

The current health care law ("America's Affordable Health Choices Act") represents the worst public policy I have seen in my entire public career. Socialized health care that raises taxes, rations care and increases costs is not the health care reform that Americans need. I continue to stand in firm opposition to the current law governing our health care system and will work diligently and tirelessly with House leadership to ensure that Americans are not saddled with a system that will ultimately reduce the quality of healthcare, raises taxes, and hamper the relationship between doctors and their patients.

4.7 million - Number of jobs that could be lost as a result of taxes on businesses that cannot afford to provide health insurance coverage, according to a model developed by Council of Economic Advisors Chair Christina Romer

\$818 billion - Total new taxes on individuals who cannot afford health coverage, and employers who cannot afford to provide coverage that meet federal bureaucrats' standards

\$1.28 trillion - New federal spending in the next ten years, according to a Congressional Budget Office score of selected elements of the bill

.6% - Percentage of all that new spending occurring in the bill's first three years—representing a debt and tax “time bomb” in the program's later years that will explode for future generations

\$88,200 - Definition of “low-income” family of four for purposes of health insurance subsidies

33 - Entitlement programs the bill creates, expands, or extends—an increase from an earlier draft

53 - Additional offices, bureaus, commissions, programs, and bureaucracies the bill creates over and above the entitlement expansions—also an increase from the discussion draft

1,683 - Uses of the word “shall,” representing new duties for bureaucrats and mandates on individuals, businesses, and States—and an increase of 306 mandates from the discussion draft

\$10 billion - Minimum loss sustained by taxpayers every year due to Medicare fraud; the government-run health plan does not reform the ineffective anti-fraud statutes and procedures that have kept Medicare on the Government Accountability Office's list of high-risk programs for two decades

Zero - Prohibitions on government programs like Medicare and Medicaid from using cost-effectiveness research to impose delays to or denials for access to life-saving treatments

2017 - Year Medicare Hospital Insurance Trust Fund will be exhausted—a date unchanged by the bill, which re-directs savings from Medicare to fund new entitlements for younger Americans

\$2,500 - Promised savings for each American family from health reform, according to then-Senator Obama's campaign pledge—savings which the Congressional Budget Office has confirmed will not materialize, as the bill will not slow the growth of health care costs

What Does the Current Health Care Law Contain?

- Nearly half a trillion dollars in tax increases on certain income filers, a majority of whom are small businesses—and \$729.5 billion in tax increases overall;
- Insurance regulations that raise costs for nearly all Americans, particularly young Americans, and confine choice of plans to those approved by a board of bureaucrats;
- New price controls on health insurance companies that provide perverse incentives to keep individuals sick rather than managing chronic disease, while impeding patient access to important services just because those services do not provide a direct clinical benefit;
- Additional federal mandates that significantly erode the flexibility currently provided to employers—and have already resulted in firms dropping coverage;
- Liability “reforms” intended to ensure trial lawyers do not have their compensation reduced, rather than meaningful changes that would reduce the cost of health care by eliminating wasteful defensive medicine practices;
 - Establishment of a bureaucrat-run health Exchange that would abolish the private market for individual insurance outside the Exchange. The groundwork for a single-payer approach due to the Exchange’s ability to cannibalize existing employer plans;
- Creation of a new government board, the “Health Benefits Advisory Committee,” that would empower federal bureaucrats to impose new mandates on individuals and insurance carriers;
- Taxation of individuals who do not purchase a level of health coverage that meets the dictates of a board of bureaucrats—including those who cannot afford the coverage options provided;
- New, job-killing taxes—\$135 billion worth—on employers who cannot afford to provide their workers health insurance, resulting in up to 5.5 million lost jobs, according to a model developed by President Obama’s chief economic advisor;
- Penalties as high as \$500,000 on employers who make honest mistakes when filing paperwork with the government health board—which would likely dissuade businesses from continuing to provide coverage, increasing enrollment in the bureaucrat-run Exchange;

- Arbitrary and harmful cuts to Medicare Advantage plans that would result in millions of seniors losing their current health coverage; and
- Expanded price controls on pharmaceutical products that would discourage companies from producing life-saving breakthrough treatments.

What Will the Current Health Care Law Do?

- The law raises taxes on everyone, but also creates new taxes on small businesses and individuals who do not have health insurance. For example, after the tax increase, the top tax rate for a resident of California will now be over 57%, which makes it the highest income tax rate in the industrialized world (Sweden is 56%).
- It will increase the overall cost of health care in the country by trillions of dollars. The Congressional Budget Office had found there is no substantive evidence that the plan will lower the cost of health care as the President has asserted.
- Current estimates project that there will be nearly 5 million additional jobs that will disappear nationwide, as a result of the plan.
- Doctors, hospitals, and other medical providers will be paid even less than they are currently being paid by Medicare or Medicaid, which will bankrupt many.
- A government bureaucracy will determine whether you are allowed to receive treatments or medicines, and sometimes, as happens in other socialized countries, whether you are allowed to live or die.
- It does not deal with the bankruptcy of the Medicare system or Social Security, and, instead, spends the taxes supposedly raised to balance these entitlements on the new programs and bureaucracies.
- Through personal and employer mandates, it will continue to limit the availability of private

health insurance, and, in effect, will transition virtually everyone currently with private insurance onto to government care.

- And, remarkably, it will not even provide everyone with insurance. In other words, it will not even fix what it is supposed to fix.

Below are links to my take on health care reform:

[A Right to Health Care? - OCRegister Editorial](#)

[Laptop Report - Socialized Medicine and the Patients Choice Act - Monday July 20, 2009](#)

[President Obama has Mislead us on Healthcare - The Greeneyeshade Blog](#)

[Laptop Report - The Perils of Socialized Medicine - Monday July 27, 2009](#)

[Community Commentary - Health Plan Won't Help Americans - Daily Pilot](#)

[Confounding America's Ideals - Washington Times Editorial](#)