

The Ten Worst Provisions in Senate Health Care Bill

Spends Way Too Much: \$2.5 trillion over the first ten years that the plan is fully implemented

Raises Taxes During a Recession: Hikes taxes \$493 billion with new levies on so-called “Cadillac” plans, a new Medicare payroll tax on higher-income earners, and taxes on health insurance and drug manufacturing companies, which are sure to be passed on consumers in the form of higher premiums

Individual Mandate: Requires individuals to carry health insurance or exacts a fine up to \$750

Business Burdens: taxes employers with more than 50 full-time workers if they are not offered insurance. CBO estimates employers would opt to drop as many as 5 million workers from private insurance, and pay the fine instead of maintaining current coverage

Huge Medicaid Expansion: an estimated 40 percent expansion of the entitlement program would greatly increase costs for government and taxpayers. States would be forced to manage the increased load. However, the federal government would pick up a large share of the new cost

Insurance Companies can still Limit Benefits: Although one of the prime reasons for this entire effort was to force insurance companies to live up to their commitments, the Senate bill would only ban lifetime-benefit caps. Insurance companies can still invoke yearly limits that will have essentially the same effect

Bad for Seniors: Cuts \$120 billion from Medicare Advantage, which CBO says will result in fewer seniors with access to vision, dental and flu shots. Ultimately, up to 2.6 million seniors could lose their Medicare Advantage coverage

More Bureaucracy: Creates comparative effectiveness panels, a Medicare Advisory Board and a Health Care Commissioner, all of whom would be responsible for oversight of the greatly-expanded government role in health care and invoking rationing in attempts to contain cost

Doesn't Tackle Tort Reform: Despite the president's commitment to lower medical liability costs, the bill only contains a “Sense of Senate” provision, with no real reforms that could save up to \$54 billion over ten years

Auto-Enrollment: Businesses with more than 200 workers will be required to automatically enroll employees in health coverage

NOTE: While it would *appear* that the health care bill is constantly changing, it's actually not. The big upcoming House vote will be on the Senate bill, HR3590 (it has an HR number because they used an unrelated House bill as a shell because revenue bills must originate in the House) exactly as it passed the Senate on Christmas Eve. There are a lot of promises being made right now that the bill will be fixed or improved in various ways after it passes, possibly via reconciliation as well as, according to the latest rumors a stand-alone abortion fix (the Senate bill

did not include Stupak's anti-abortion language). It's very important to understand however, that once the House passes the Senate bill it goes to the President to be signed into law. There is no guarantee that any of the changes, deals, or fixes being discussed will actually happen. We cannot let any member of the House get away with voting yes based promises from the White House or Democratic leadership to make changes later. Once the bill passes, they will have little reason to do so, and frankly, any changes they make would amount to tinkering around the edges of an already-enacted law that gives Washington control of our health care.

So we need to keep things simple. The House is voting on the Senate bill, which is disastrous. For one thing, it still includes dozens of corrupt special-interest deals like the Cornhusker Kickback, the Louisiana Purchase, Chris Dodd's \$100M University of Connecticut Hospital earmark, etc. It's also a policy disaster. I can't stress enough that it is the actual Senate bill, HR3590, and not any hypothetical future changes, that the House will soon be asked to vote on.

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