

## Below The Beltway

**I believe in the free speech that liberals used to believe in, the economic freedom that conservatives used to believe in, and the personal freedom that America used to believe in.**

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### The So-Called Opposition Party's Health Care Plan

by Doug Mataconis @ 4:48 pm on August 24, 2009.

In today's Washington Post, [RNC Chairman Michael Steele outlined](#) what the GOP is calling it's [Senior Health Care Bill Of Rights](#):

PROTECT MEDICARE AND NOT CUT IT IN THE NAME OF HEALTH CARE REFORM: President Obama and Congressional Democrats are promoting a government-run health care experiment that will cut over \$500 billion from Medicare to be used to pay for their plan. Medicare should not be raided to pay for another entitlement.

Yes, you read that right. The Republican Party is actually arguing *against cutting one of the costliest, most waste-ridden parts of the Federal Budget*.

Any of you fiscal conservatives out there who read that far should either realize that there is no point in having faith in the Republican Party, or just admit that your fiscal conservatism is a fraud.

\* PROHIBIT GOVERNMENT FROM GETTING BETWEEN SENIORS AND THEIR DOCTORS: The Democrats' government-run health care experiment will give patients less power to control their own medical decisions, and create government boards that would decide what treatments would or wouldn't be funded. Republicans believe in patient-centered reforms that put the priorities of seniors before government.

Umm, what about that big program that does get between Seniors and their Doctors ?

You know the one I'm talking about, it's called.....Medicare.

PROHIBIT EFFORTS TO RATION HEALTH CARE BASED ON AGE: The Democrats' government-run health care experiment would set up a "comparative effectiveness research commission" where health care treatment decisions could be limited based on a patient's age. Republicans believe that health care decisions are best left up to seniors and their doctors.

Again, as long as you have something like Medicare, there will be rationing decisions made, whether their explicit or not.

PREVENT GOVERNMENT FROM INTERFERING WITH END-OF-LIFE CARE DISCUSSIONS: The Democrats' government-run health care experiment would have seniors meet with a doctor to discuss end-of-life care that could mean limiting treatment. Republicans believe that government should not interfere with end-of-life care discussions between a patient and a doctor.

See above.

**ENSURE SENIORS CAN KEEP THEIR CURRENT COVERAGE:** As Democrats continue to propose steep cuts to Medicare in order to pay for their government-run health care experiment, these cuts threaten millions of seniors with being forced from their current Medicare Advantage plans. Republicans believe that seniors should not be targeted by a government-run health care bill and forced out of their current Medicare coverage.

See the first item above.

**PROTECT VETERANS BY PRESERVING TRICARE AND OTHER BENEFIT PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES:** Democrats recently proposed raising veterans' costs for the Tricare For Life program that many veterans rely on for treatment. Republicans oppose increasing the burden on our veterans and believe America should honor our promises to them.

Again, see the first item above.

Chris Edwards at The Cato Institute points out just [what is so horribly wrong about this “plan” that doesn't deserve to be called a plan:](#)

[T]he taxpayer costs of Medicare are expected to more than double over the next decade (from \$425 billion in 2009 to \$871 billion in 2019), and the program will consume an increasing share of the nation's economy for decades to come unless there are serious cuts and reforms. Even the Obama administration talks about “bending the cost curve” to slow the program's growth.

As Edwards goes on to point out, this “plan” makes the GOP's message is clear:

Fiscal conservatives, who have come out in droves to tea party protests and health care meetings this year, are angry at both parties for the government's massive spending and debt binge in recent years. Mr. Steele has now informed these folks loud and clear that the Republican Party is not interested in restraining government; it is not interested in cutting the program that creates the single biggest threat to taxpayers in coming years. For apparently crass political reasons, Steele defends “our seniors,” but at the expense of massive tax hikes on “our children” if entitlement programs are not cut.

Exactly.

If nothing else, stuff like this should establish for even the willfully blind that the credibility of the GOP as a party of limited government ought to be shot to hell. They don't care about restraining government. They care about winning elections and they're willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish that.

Along those lines, Jon Henke [gets it right:](#)

What exactly is the message here? That Republicans think Medicare is peachy? Republicans are now the Party of the [Entitlement Status Quo?](#)

The Democrats tried to address Iraq like this in 2004. Their proposals amounted to “*The same, but....better! And less expensive! No hard choices for America! Please like us.*”

The GOP is doing the same thing on health care. This is not a policy vision; it is a campaign vision. The message is: *We want to [pick off](#) some senior citizen votes in 2010.*

That's about all it is.

No principle.

No message that Medicare entitlements are going to kill this country if we don't get them under control.

Just pure politics.



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## One Response to “The So-Called Opposition Party’s Health Care Plan”

1. *Anarchist Accountant* Says:

[August 25th, 2009 at 12:21 pm](#)

Looks like if you aren't retired, the Republicans couldn't give a shit about you...just like everyone who gets elected down here in Florida

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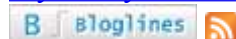
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- **88** days until Ohio State v. Michigan 2009
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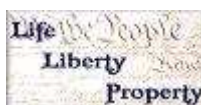
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