

Forbes

Marco Rubio's Healthcare Plan Absolutely Does Not Contain An Individual Mandate

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February 25, 2016

Few people have done more to advance the cause of Obamacare repeal than the Cato Institute's Michael Cannon, the leading force behind the *King v. Burwell* challenge to Obamacare's individual mandate.

That's why I was so...disappointed...to see an article just posted by Cannon over at NRO. Its title is "Marco Rubio's Healthcare Plan Has an Individual Mandate."

I was floored. After all, I'm a big supporter of Marco Rubio for President, and I'm a big opponent of government mandates to do anything, especially government mandates to purchase health insurance. Has Marco sold out?

No. In fact, what Cannon is referring to is the voluntary tax credit Rubio's plan creates to help individuals purchase health insurance.

Huh?

I'll let Cannon explain:

The centerpiece of Rubio's proposal would 'provid[e] every American with an advanceable, refundable tax credit that can be used to purchase insurance.' What does that mean? If you purchase a government-approved health plan, you could save, for example, \$2,000 on your taxes. If you don't, you pay that \$2,000 to the government.

So we've now gotten to the point where a candidate running for office cannot propose a tax cut without there being a "mandate" attached to choosing not to take that tax cut.

By this twisted, Orwellian logic, there is a government mandate to have kids (child tax credit), buy a house (mortgage interest deduction) and save for retirement (401(k) plans). I hope you will agree with me that this is officially coo-coo for Coco Puffs.

Tax credits are a standard part of Republican healthcare reform plans. In fact, they are a part of every Congressional and presidential GOP plan that I'm aware of with the singular exception of

the House Republican Study Committee plan. There are a half dozen or more major plans that all have them, and it's not an overstatement to say that they have become a standard feature of Obamacare replace plans across the board.

What's more, Cannon's article is irresponsible. The Republican base is riled up with incendiary half-truths and outright base-baiting lies all the time by demagogues and Beltway professional "Con\$ervatives" (to use a great term from Matt Lewis' fantastic book *Too Dumb to Fail*). You can't just start throwing around terms like "individual mandate" without getting people very mad, and we policy experts who are relied upon for information have a responsibility to the public and to our supporters.

Michael knows better than to trick good people into getting mad at Marco Rubio over a point of complete sophistry and twisted triple negatives. It's beneath the serious healthcare work he has dedicated his career to and he should retract his scurrilous article immediately.