

Matt Yglesias

Today at 11:29 am

A Conservative Stands Up For Danielscare, But Obsession With ACA Repeal Stands In The Way of Progress



I wondered if any conservatives writers were going to stand up for Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels' record of constructive right-of-center reform against Michael Cannon's [slightly insane viewpoint](#) that any measure whatsoever to offer health care services to people in need is a betrayal. Grace-Marie Turner [steps up to the plate](#) on The Corner with an admirable item.

However, we once again see the difficulty conservatives with decent ideas about health care have in dealing with the Affordable Care Act. Health care policy is a controversial topic, and people tend to disagree about it. Liberals disagree with other liberals. Conservatives disagree with other conservatives. But what all conservatives agree on is that

the Affordable Care Act must be repealed. Indeed, this is essentially the *definition* of what constitutes a conservative health care policy these days. So any writing on health care policy that wants a conservative label needs to gin up some reason that the ideas in question logically imply ACA repeal. Turner, for example, concludes an otherwise sober description of what Indiana's done with a federal Medicaid waiver with this:

A final note of caution: If Obamacare isn't repealed, HIP will likely have a tombstone saying "R.I.P.," since it provides far too much consumer choice and individual authority to satisfy Washington regulators.

The Affordable Care Act contains a provision boosting federal funding for community health centers; is repealing that necessary to keep HIP going?

The Affordable Care Act contains a provision cutting out the middleman on federally subsidized student loans, reducing outlays and bank profits; is repealing that necessary to keep HIP going?

The Affordable Care Act contains a provision funding comparative effectiveness research so doctors can have more scientifically valid evidence about which treatments are best; is repealing that necessary to keep HIP going?

The Affordable Care Act contains a provision mandating calorie labeling on menus at chain restaurants; is repealing that necessary to keep HIP going?

I don't think so. It's very possible that the ACA would require HIP to be modified in some respects. Alternatively, it's possible that keeping HIP in place would require the ACA to be modified in some respects.

As a third alternative, since HIP currently exists under a Medicaid waiver, it's possible that the existing waiver framework is basically sufficient. It's also possible to raise objections to the many, many, many, many ACA provisions that plainly have nothing to do with Indiana's Medicaid program. Any of these arguments would be constructive contributions to future discussion. The Affordable Care Act is an immense piece of legislation and I don't think anyone wants or expects it to go un-modified indefinitely. But as long as conservatives insist that all future health care policy discussions need to begin with repeal then it's not possible to do anything.

5

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shah8 Today 11:41 AM

Behind slogans, the fight is about slowing adverse health regulations, well, adverse to service providers, that is...

Of course, long term, the politics, such as we have them, will prove this path unviable, because nobody can really cope with how disorderly the whole scheme is now, and how primed to extortion. There's only so many racial shibboleths can do to maintain status quo.

Morgan Warstler Today 11:45 AM

As long as most Likely Voters are happy with the status quo, ACA is screwed.

tga999 Today 11:49 AM

I don't understand why an ubermensch like you expends so much energy posting on an internet discussion board. Shouldn't you be off building a parasite-free society in rural Colorado?

11 people liked this.

Steve LaBonne Today 11:57 AM

If he's there how can it be parasite-free?

10 people liked this.

[Stephen Eldridge](#)

Today 11:51 AM

Err, ACA is the status quo, so....

9 people liked this.

[Jasper_in_Boston](#)

Today 12:35 PM

As long as most Likely Voters are happy with the status quo, ACA is screwed.

How so? Absent a court victory for the opponents of the ACA, jettisoning the legislation requires both a GOP president in 2013 **and** a 60 Republican Senate (or very close to it). Not likely. And once 2014 arrives there's no way Americans will go back to a world where a person can be locked out of the system because he had the poor sense to acquire a preexisting condition.

Most voters favor raising taxes on the rich and cutting military spending, too. Doesn't mean it's going to happen.

6 people liked this.

[jlk7e](#)

56 minutes ago

ACA is the status quo.

3 people liked this.

[Morgan Warstler](#)

Today 11:43 AM

It is IMPOSSIBLE to coherently discuss HIP without discussing HSAs.

And yet Matty dances over the subject matter - focusing on the shit no one on the right cares about - while he insists the right isn't being logical. His unseriousness on the subject matter is proven here. **A serious Matty would say, "Here's how states can have any kind of HSA they want under ACA - let's hope this is enough to get them to stop repealing it."**

The POINT is HSAs represent THE conservative market-based approach to driving down costs.

HIP = cost reduction in private insurance based on self determined care and price shopping.

The SECONDARY issue, the thing America wants repealed is pretending the have-nots get what the haves get. Until this is NOT POSSIBLE, ACA will be repealed.

Now your side doesn't have to win a single payer public option, but EITHER WAY, the have-nots are going to get less.

2 people liked this.

[J.W. Hamner](#)

Today 11:53 AM

Dude, I don't know how many people have to tell you this before you'll listen, but nothing about the ACA infringes on your ability to get a high deductible plan and an HSA.

11 people liked this.

[Jasper_in_Boston](#)

Today 12:37 PM

...but nothing about the ACA infringes on your ability to get a high deductible plan and an HSA.

Right. In fact it enhances it, because under the pre-2014 status quo, a purveyor of high deductible plans can refuse to issue a policy because of preexisting conditions.

8 people liked this.

[illissius](#) Today 12:02 PM

Okay, it took me something like eight times reading the title, switching to a different window, reading other things, doing other things, switching back, and reading the title again before I realized that it was intended to be read as 'Daniels care' and not 'Daniel scare'. (I assumed it was something to do with people trying to scare other people about Daniels's plan, or somesuch...)

In any event, it causes one to realize how fortunate we are that Obama's name doesn't end in an 's'. Republicans would've had a field day with that.

1 person liked this.

[Dwayne J. Stephenson](#) Today 12:48 PM

Can we stop naming health care programs after governors and presidents? I, for one, don't actually think Daniels cares at all.

2 people liked this.

[K. Bledsoe](#) Today 01:11 PM

And as long as we're busting ridiculous political memes, let's please, please, please stop adding "gate" to words to connote scandal. It hasn't made sense in decades.

2 people liked this.

[nattyb](#) Today 01:04 PM

What does HIP stand for?

[Ed Marshall](#) Today 01:11 PM

Healthy Indiana Plan

[K. Bledsoe](#) Today 01:08 PM

I've said it before: ACA repeal is the GOP's white whale, and if they ever catch it, it will destroy them. They no longer have any idea why they want repeal, it's just irrational resentment.

They mutter tort reform as if that is some sort of panacea for all things, but in fact they have no idea what they would do to replace the bill if they had the chance, since they have pretty much only defined positions as being "the opposite of whatever a Democrat says." They still haven't learned that the "culture war" frame does not work for actual governing.

7 people liked this.

[thirdeblue](#) 58 minutes ago

3/8/2011

Yglesias » A Conservative Stands Up Fo...

They still haven't learned that the "culture war" frame does not work for actual governing (well).

1 person liked this.

Real-time updating is **enabled**. ([Pause](#))

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