

AMSPECBLOG

## Pawlenty Plan Still in the Works

By Joseph Lawler on 5.25.11 @ 5:23PM

At an event at the Cato Institute today, Tim Pawlenty stopped short of endorsing the Paul Ryan debt plan and reiterated that he is working on a proposal of his own. He said that the direction of the Ryan plan was "positive," but that his would differ on Medicare reform. His Medicare proposal would include unspecified "payment reforms," which may or may not include a premium-support model along the lines of Ryan's. From his comments, it seems as though he may ultimately call for a mixed model in which Medicare beneficiaries could choose to receive premium supports for private insurance.

As Jim has argued on this blog, the Ryan budget is a starting point for discussions about how to approach the debt. Ryan specified a level of debt reduction, and indicated a possible path to that amount. In doing so, he created space for possible officeholders like Pawlenty to tweak the plan or come up with alternate strategies for accomplishing the same goal. We won't know until we see Pawlenty's proposal -- which is supposed to be in the "coming weeks and months" -- but there's no reason to think that it won't be in line with the mandate established by Ryan.

**Joseph Lawler** is managing editor of The American Spectator. Follow him on twitter: @josephlawler.