



Nullification: Winners And (Mostly) Losers

A DEBATE ABOUT NOTHING STILL HAS FALLOUT ...

The great South Carolina nullification ... or rather [non-nullification](#) ... debate ended with a whimper this week as S.C. Lt. Gov. **Glenn McConnell** ruled against an amendment sponsored by S.C. Sen. **Tom Davis** (R-Beaufort).

Davis' amendment – which would have imposed modest restrictions on the state's ability to implement parts of Obamacare – was rejected by McConnell late Wednesday. This ruling was upheld by a 24-18 vote of the full S.C. Senate. Moments later, the Senate voted 33-9 against a House bill “nullifying” Obamacare – although as we've pointed out on numerous prior occasions the House legislation nullified absolutely nothing.

Either way, the issue is now dead ...

Nullification advocates had high hopes in December 2012 when S.C. Rep. **Bill Chumley** introduced the [original version](#) of the Obamacare nullification bill.

Chumley's original bill specifically outlined how Obamacare would be nullified by state authorities – including the imprisonment of federal officials who attempted to enforce the law's provisions within South Carolina's borders.

It was the real deal, in other words ...

The legislation that ultimately [passed the S.C. House](#) was a far cry from nullification, though. It merely asserted that the Attorney General of South Carolina “may bring an action in the name of the State” on behalf of a person or business “harmed by implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.”

Anyway ... now that this debate is (mercifully) over, it's time to take a look at a few of the winners and losers.

WINNERS

Americans for Limited Government – Aside from Jim DeMint's Heritage Foundation, this grassroots advocacy group – which has impeccable pro-free market credentials – was the first out of the box on this issue. ALG provided substantive research, persuasive analysis and consistent messaging showing the utter pointlessness of this entire exercise. Other libertarian-leaning groups like The Cato Institute and The Federalist Society followed suit, but ALG took a big early risk in coming out strongly on this issue – a risk that paid off.

Tom Davis – Sure, he lost the war over his amendment ... but the nullification debate earned Davis the respect of lawmakers and activists on both sides of the fight. His effort to find a middle ground may have failed, but Davis found his way back into the limelight for the first time in a long time – seeking workable solutions out of the pile of crap he inherited from the S.C. House. Davis had been uncharacteristically silent in the months leading up to this scrape – but he's now back on the radar in a big way.

Nikki Haley – On Medicaid expansion and the effort to block Obamacare, Nikki Haley has been a monumental hypocrite ([HERE](#) and [HERE](#)). She'll get a hall pass on this round, though. The failure of the S.C. General Assembly to send a nullification-related bill to her desk means she won't have to take a position on an issue she's been dodging for months.

LOSERS

Barack Obama – Given the Palmetto State's, um, [colorful history](#), the false perception that a nullification bill had been passed would have presented the Obama White House with a golden opportunity to frame Obamacare opponents unflatteringly. Now Obama will have to continue reading stories about how his law is a complete and total clusterfuck that's [jacking insurance costs](#), among other unfortunate outcomes.

Glenn McConnell – Sure the debate over this legislation was an exercise in irrelevance, but McConnell will be forever remembered by nullification supporters as the guy who put the final stake in the heart of their dream. Assuming he gets his cushy government job at the College of Charleston, he won't care about their enmity – but if he ever has to face the voters again, his role in this debate has the potential to hurt him.

The John Birch Society – With ALG, Cato, The Federalist Society, FITSNews and the Heritage Foundation all aligned against this ridiculous waste of taxpayer time and legislative energy, it stood to reason that some right wing group was going to get behind it. After all, South Carolinians are dumber than they look – and a group with special interest backing that doesn't mind throwing intellectually disingenuous red meat will always find a willing audience in the Palmetto State. Unfortunately, the Birchers [didn't exactly distinguish themselves](#) in the fray ...

South Carolinians – Residents of the Palmetto State suffer from abysmally low income levels, atrociously deficient academic outcomes and a bloated, corrupt, dysfunctional state government. Rather than taking substantive steps to fix these problems, state lawmakers have wasted huge

chunks of time debating what amounted to a non-biding preamble of a piece of utterly meaningless legislation.

Read more at <http://www.fitsnews.com/2014/03/20/nullification-winners-mostly-losers/#9qXLt64dyiTFkJOz.99>