

Community must remember laws can have good intentions but unseen consequences

September 5, 2012 | Stephen Sydor | Class of 2014

Most people only see what they want to see, especially in politics.

Many advocates of big government like to show their smiling faces next to some project the government financed. The side of the story that people don't see or hear about is where did the money come from? Where could the money have been spent if it wasn't spent on this project?

Many laws have good intentions but unseen consequences that can hurt a lot of people. An example is President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare. One of the seen affects of the health care law is that dependents get to stay on their parents' insurance until they are 26.

What is unseen, though, is the Department of Health and Human Services estimates the cost of continuing coverage for ages 18 to 26 is \$3,400 per child. That cost is put to insurance companies and the employers who usually pay for insurance.

Another consequence is that employers and insurance companies are dropping dependent care. Among them is one of the largest union-administered health insurance funds in New York, SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, which is now dropping dependent coverage for 30,000 workers.

Ironically, the fund had previously covered nearly 6,000 workers' children, some up to age 23. Those students, along with other spouses and children, are out of luck. Now they have to buy private insurance or get subsidized insurance, which makes people dependent on government health care and increases costs for the government.

Another example is the ban on denying insurance for pre-existing conditions for adults and children. Obviously, all the parents with sick children rushed their kids to get insurance. This increase in services costs more money, which is fine. The problem is that all the parents of healthy children did not want to get insurance because it costs more. This forced the price up, and more healthy kids dropped out. Insurers in 20 states have already dropped "child-only" plans.

These parents will have to buy more expensive family plans or forgo insurance altogether. This argument goes well beyond Obamacare. It has to do with the idea

that things like higher taxes only affect rich people or corporations when, in reality, they affect everyone.

There are costs to every action and it is usually a lot easier to just see the government “goodies,” but that doesn’t mean they came without consequences. All statistics are from Michael Tanner of the Cato Institute.