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ObamaCare: It's one year too many

To many blue-state voters, the campaign against "ObamaCare" must be perplexing. After all, America needs lower health care costs. ObamaCare would supposedly cover millions of uninsured Americans, and some claim it would reduce the deficit.

So why have I, and so many others, resolved not to rest until we discard it? Perhaps I can explain.

Historically, the more governments have become involved in health care decisions, two things happen. First, health care costs rise, and, second, access to health care services declines. I believe ObamaCare is clearly causing health care costs to rise and ultimately will reduce access to health care services.

As important as health insurance is, most people need a job more than they need health insurance. What people want is a good education for their children, a decent job and affordable health care. However, the unemployment rate is at 9 percent nationwide and 12 percent in Florida. I have seen firsthand how this law's mandates on employers and workers keep many of those Americans from getting jobs.

For example, take Florida's two largest industries: tourism and agriculture. Both industries compete, based on price, with companies located in countries where it is less costly to operate. There is no mandate for employers to provide employee health insurance or for individuals to purchase health insurance in those countries. As federal, state and local laws and regulations increase operating costs for America's businesses, more and more jobs will move overseas. That trend hurts the least-skilled Americans the most.

I have never seen or heard of anyone shopping at Wal-Mart and saying, "I think I will buy the more expensive product because the manufacturer is subject to more costly laws and regulations."

During my campaign, small employers constantly told me they were reluctant to hire any additional employees because they could not afford to either provide health care insurance for their employees or pay the ObamaCare penalties (which are taxes) for failing to provide such insurance. Florida growers said the cost of providing health care to their lower-income employees would make the cost of their produce non-competitive. Thus, they were working to move their production, and their jobs, to countries where it is less expensive to operate. Again, American buyers often shop based on price, so businesses must trim their costs in every possible way.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates this law will reduce the number of jobs by a net 800,000 within 10 years, which doesn't even count the temporary spells of unemployment the law will create.

The law was supposed to reduce health care costs. In congressional testimony, the Obama administration's chief Medicare actuary, Richard Foster, called this claim "false, more so than true."

This law is already increasing health insurance premiums by forcing Floridians to purchase health coverage that they do not want or cannot afford. That purchase reduces their take-home pay and spending and therefore stifles job creation.

As part of my "jobs" budget, I am reducing both corporate and individual taxes, knowing the path to private sector job growth is tied to getting more money in the pockets of Florida businesses and consumers. ObamaCare does exactly the opposite.

The law is pushing Americans out of their current health plans, threatening many patients' continuity of care. The president keeps repeating, "If you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan." In Congressional testimony, Foster called this claim "not true in all cases."

Before this law was enacted, Florida parents who were laid off or who couldn't get dependent coverage at work were able to purchase inexpensive "child-only" coverage for their children. The law's "consumer protections" have now eliminated that choice in Florida and 17 other states.

The law uses price controls to ration care to senior citizens. Medicare's chief actuary estimates these price controls will cut off seniors' access to 15 percent of Medicare-participating hospitals.

Experts, from Richard Foster to the CBO, to the International Monetary Fund, have poured cold water on claims that ObamaCare will lower the deficit. It will increase our immorally high federal deficits and debt precisely because Congress will ultimately rescind the inhumane rationing tools.

The law also threatens Florida's state budget. A study by the Cato Institute's Jagadeesh Gokhale estimates Florida will have to increase its Medicaid spending by 11 percent in 2014 and by 24 percent over the next 10 years â a \$24 billion unfunded mandate. This is money we do not have.

Floridians, like most Americans, believe they are taxed too much, even though we do not have a state income tax. In per capita terms, Florida's burden will be four times higher than California's.

Finally, the law that enacted ObamaCare exerts a power that Congress does not have: the power to force Americans to purchase private health insurance. If the federal government can do that, what's to prevent it from forcing us to purchase other private products? The law's supporters have no answer for this question. Blue-state voters should ask themselves: What products might a Republican president and Congress â and their corporate backers â make us buy?

For this reason, Florida initiated a lawsuit asking the courts to strike down the law as unconstitutional. We were joined by 25 other states; the small-businesses lobby, National Federation of Independent Business; and two individual citizens. Last month, a federal district court judge in Florida ruled that this "individual mandate" is unconstitutional and struck down the entire law.

There is much confusion about the implications of our lawsuit. If we are successful, our lawsuit will strike down one law and one law only. It would not affect any other law, as some have claimed â because there is no other law like this one. The health care law's "individual mandate" is unique and unprecedented.

Unless a higher court alters that order, the law is dead in Florida. If the federal government ignores that order and tries to enforce the law in Florida, we will see them in court.

Whatever the fate of Florida's lawsuit, we will not seek any federal funds available under the health care law. We will not set up a health insurance "exchange" â a new euphemism for an arm of the federal government that implements federal regulations. These things do not represent health care reform. If an "exchange" were a good idea, the private sector would already have created one.

And we will not be satisfied with overturning this law. America needs real health care reform that reduces costs and makes access to care broader and more secure.

Elections, the president reminds us, have consequences, and one of the consequences of the 2010 election is that "ObamaCare" is finished.

If the political branches or the Supreme Court fail to void the law during this Congress, we hold to the hope that there will be another election soon.