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RomneyCare Just Got \$150 Million More Expensive

By Michael F. Cannon
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One of the ways Massachusetts officials have tried to temper RomneyCare's cost overruns was denying participation to legal immigrants. Last week, the Commonwealth's highest court [ruled](#) the restriction violates the Massachusetts Constitution:

Massachusetts cannot bar legal immigrants from a state health care program, according to a ruling issued Thursday by the state's highest court...

The ruling said that a 2009 state budget that dropped about 29,000 legal immigrants who had lived in the United States for less than five years from Commonwealth Care, a subsidized [health insurance](#) program central to this state's 2006 [health care overhaul](#), violated the State Constitution.

"This appropriation discriminated on the basis of alienage and national origin," wrote Justice Robert J. Cordy of the Supreme Judicial Court, ruling that the action "violates their rights to equal protection under the Massachusetts Constitution."...

State officials say they will abide by the decision, although they are not yet sure how to pay for the change.

"This decision has significant fiscal impacts for the commonwealth, adding somewhere in the range of \$150 million in annual costs to what is already a very challenging budget," said Jay Gonzalez, secretary of administration and finance.

No doubt their "pay for" will involve another unpopular minority.

Former Romney/Obama advisor Jonathan Gruber has [written](#) that RomneyCare was already cost the state \$50 billion more than projected by 2009. Of course, supporters have been [hiding RomneyCare's costs \(and exaggerating its benefits\)](#) all along.

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