



## Behind the veil: ObamaCare is ailing

Chris Woodward

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The Affordable Care Act has problems – and some people think President Obama knows it.

The Government Accountability Office is warning again that the ObamaCare marketplace is still viable for fraud. That's after numerous reports on closing co-ops, insurers getting out of states and exchanges, and higher premiums for many 2017 plans.

Maybe that's why Obama popped in on a meeting with insurers this week ahead of the enrollment period that begins in November. An unidentified White House official told CNBC that the purpose of Monday's meeting was "to emphasize the administration's commitment to working with them, discuss recent actions to further strengthen the [Obamacare] marketplace, and ask for their help in signing up uninsured Americans."

Michael Cannon, director of health policy studies at the Cato Institute, argues that Obama's visit is revealing.

"The president doesn't drop in on a meeting with insurance executives if things are going well with ObamaCare," says Cannon. "This shows that the president knows that there's a serious problem here – so serious that [he's] trying to get a backdoor bailout for these insurance companies, [as] I'm sure that this is what they discussed at this meeting."

Insurers are suing the administration to get money they believe they are owed, but Cannon says Congress didn't promise or appropriate those funds.

"The administration is so desperate to keep them in the exchanges," he explains, "that they are talking about raiding other government funds in order to settle these lawsuits with the insurance companies to give them the money that they want to keep participating in ObamaCare." While Cannon says that's not legal, it's not going to solve the problem either.

"It's just going to kick the can down the road. The next president is going to have to deal with this problem and they're not going to be able to keep tapping this money to provide insurers the bailout that they need," the health policy expert says. "Eventually, Democrats are going to have to work with Republicans on this issue – and Republicans are not interested in saving ObamaCare."