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## How the Dems hide the cost of the health care bill

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Evidence has surfaced of the process by which Democrats hide the cost of health care reform from the public. Michael F. Cannon of the Cato Institute has done the [detective work](#).

A [CBO memorandum](#) issued last weekend reveals overt gaming of the Congressional Budget Office's criteria for accounting what constitutes a cost or revenue to the government. Cannon explains:

... keeping the cost of their private-sector mandates out of the federal budget has been Job One for Democratic health wonks. While head of the CBO, Obama's budget director [Peter Orszag](#) altered the CBO's orientation to make it more open and collaborative. One of the things about which the CBO has been more open is the criteria it uses to determine whether to include mandated private-sector spending in the federal budget. The CBO even published [a paper](#) on the topic. Read [this profile](#) of Orszag by [Ezra Klein](#), and you'll see that those criteria were also a likely area of collaboration with lawmakers. [...]

Crafting the private-sector mandates such that they fall just a hair short of CBO's criteria for inclusion in the federal budget does not reduce their cost, nor does it make those mandates any less binding. But it dramatically reduces the *apparent* cost of the legislation. It is the reason we're all talking about an \$848 billion Reid bill, rather than a \$2.1 trillion Reid bill.

If someone sold you a house, or a car, or a mutual fund this way, we would put them in jail.

The Democrats are selling the country a plan with huge hidden costs, and deliberately manipulating the bill to prevent public understanding and debate with full understanding.

Hat tip: Clarice Feldman

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