

Health care law as a human rights victory? Maybe not ...

Posted by **Thomas Mitchell**

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Buried in the lengthy mea culpa from the Obama administration's human rights report to the United Nations, the one that says this is an awful country that fails to fully provide human rights, is a boast that the health insurance reform act will further human rights.

[Michael F. Cannon](#), right, the Cato Institute's director of health policy studies, begs to differ.

The [human rights report claims](#), “Implementation of the Affordable Care Act will help more Americans get the care they need to live healthy lives and ensure more Americans are free to learn, work, and contribute to their communities.”

Cannon [points out in a podcast](#) that the centerpiece of the law is a requirement for people to purchase insurance or be subject to fines or jail. He finds it ironic that the administration is citing this as a human rights accomplishment.

During the Democratic primaries, Cannon reminds, candidate Barack Obama attacked Sen. Hillary Clinton for advocating mandated coverage, saying people would still have no insurance and would be paying taxes and penalties.

In fact, during the debate over the law, says Cannon, the bill was changed to state that the IRS could not impose liens or criminal penalties on those who fail to pay the health care law's fines.

“Attorney General of the United States shall not (A) file notice of lien with respect to any property of a person by reason of any failure to pay the penalty imposed by this subsection; or (B) levy on any such property with respect to such failure,” [the law now says](#).

But &hellip

The man from Cato explains what really would happen. If you owe a \$1,000 fine, the IRS will simply take that from your income tax withholdings and say, now you owe us \$1,000 income tax. If you fail to pay, you will be subject to liens, fines and imprisonment for tax evasion.

He calls the law an “affront” to human rights, not an example of promoting human rights.

Listen to the podcast:





Read [my Sunday column](#) on the interesting groups a local attorney is using to attack the law on constitutional grounds. Not now, Sunday.

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