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Top Five Obamacare Budget Gimmicks

Posted by: [Kevin Glass](#) at 7:39 AM

I noted before the [massive amounts of qualifiers](#) that the Congressional Budget Office has attached to its scores of the health care bill at every stage of its evolution. This latest bill, however, rivals the greatest magic tricks that J.K. Rowling could come up with.

1. Double-counting Medicare cuts as both [saving Medicare and spending on new programs](#)
2. Counting revenue that must be used for future spending [as deficit-reducing savings](#)
3. Starting revenue provisions immediately while [delaying spending provisions until 2014](#)
4. Carefully writing the language so that [the CBO can't count the individual mandate in the cost of the bill](#) (which they had done in the past)
5. Claiming that [additional tax money raised will go to pay for spending in the bill](#) when it must be used for other programs

Hat tips: Phil Klein, Peter Suderman, Michael Cannon

Did any of your favorites not make the list?

UPDATE: I neglected the first and perhaps most *obvious* budget gimmick when rifling through my exhaustive list: the Medicare "doc fix." When the bill was originally written, Democrats included the cost of a doctor reimbursement adjustment in the omnibus bill. When it became clear that the over-\$200 billion cost of the doc fix would eliminate all pretension of deficit neutrality and push the total cost of the bill over \$1 trillion (not to mention highlight Congress' inability to stick to Medicare cuts), they struck it from the bill and passed it separately.

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