

Matt Yglesias

Today at 12:14 pm

Questions Answered

Michael Cannon from the Cato Institute has been doing a series of posts where he sort of nags ObamaCare fans about nitpicky process issues, since I guess at this point everyone's tired of debating substance. But there's just not that much you can say about process, and I think it's hugely disingenuous of people who simply oppose the bill on the merits to pretend that they care about this BS:

What does it say that pharmaceutical-industry lobbyists are meeting with House Democrats to write this legislation behind closed doors?

Pharma thinks that if more people have health insurance, more people will be able to buy medicine.

Or that the pharmaceutical industry is preparing to spend millions of dollars on advertisements in support of the legislation?

Pharma thinks that if more people have health insurance, more people will be able to buy medicine.

Does it trouble you that a former federal judge writes, "Under Article I, Section 7, passage of one bill cannot be deemed to be enactment of another"?

No. This would be important if it were correct, but if it were correct the House Democrats wouldn't be pursuing the "deeming" strategy.

Does it trouble you that Speaker Pelosi says of the proposed "deeming" strategy, "I like it because people don't have to vote on the Senate bill"?

No.

What does it say that left-of-center The Washington Post editorializes that the Democrats' endgame seems "dodgy" and "threatens to turn into something unseemly and, more important, contrary to Democrats' promises of transparency and time for deliberation"?

It says that the Washington Post editorial page isn't left-of-center but is unhealthily obsessed with process BS.

What does it say about the feasibility of the Obama health plan that Speaker Pelosi is drawn to the "deeming" strategy, which she once opposed in a court of law?

Pelosi tried to get deeming declared illegal when she was in the minority, but she failed so now she uses it.

Most of all, what these process stories show is that it's a shame that 41 Senators stand prepared to filibuster any healthcare legislation, which is forcing a lot of weird process stuff and creating a lot of weird process stories.

Update In the original, I at one point typed "substance" when I meant "process."

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43 Responses to “Questions Answered”

1. *Jason L.* Says:

[March 17th, 2010 at 12:17 pm](#)

MY:But there's just not that much you can say about substance...

???

You meant to say, “But there's just not that much you can say about *process...*”, no?

2. *Ed Smithe* Says:

[March 17th, 2010 at 12:23 pm](#)

Does it trouble you that a former federal judge writes, “Under Article I, Section 7, passage of one bill cannot be deemed to be enactment of another“?

No. This would be important if it were correct, but if it were correct the House Democrats wouldn't be pursuing the “deeming” strategy.

MY's stupidity...because what any of our representatives are interested in when they pass legislation is the Constitution.

Moreover, your final point predictably runs completely contrary to this one as you've spent about 2 seconds using your brain. Either Pelosi believes it is unconstitutional or she doesn't. According to your comment, the only thing that she seems to have made up her mind on is that she needs to use this maneuver. Why would that be? If she was concerned about legality, then she would determine legality. But she isn't so she doesn't.

Don't get me wrong, this is no different than some of the shit that Republicans have done over the years. What I'm sick and tired of is hearing the hypocrisy from both sides...pretending that they care about something more than getting their little pet projects through. You guys are just as guilty as your Republican enemies.

Just fess up and say that you don't give a shit about the Constitution. What you want is health care come hell or high water. Have an ounce of intellectual honesty.