

EDITORIALS

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Where do Mollohan and Rahall stand?

Underhanded tricks won't make a bad health care bill look better

Democratic members of the House of Representatives are being urged to pass the Senate's gargantuan health care bill as early as this week.

That would let Senate leaders declare this monstrosity a done deal and pass it with only 51 votes.

The West Virginia delegation should reject - publicly - such underhanded measures. This is no way to pass what threatens to become the biggest new entitlement program since Social Security.

According to recent polls, 53 percent of the American people oppose liberal Democrats' plan.

According to the Cato Institute, the plan congressmen are being asked to pass would cost \$6.5 trillion over 20 years.

The bill would cut \$500 billion from Medicare, which is underfunded, and thus ration care for seniors.

It would raise income taxes from 35 percent to 43 percent. It would raise capital gains taxes from 15 percent to 22 percent.

It would drive private insurance premiums up by as much as \$3 trillion - as much as \$2,000 on average, according to some estimates.

It would force young people to buy health insurance they may not need, want or be able to afford - or fine them 2.5 percent of their incomes.

It would tax medical devices and medical procedures - thus driving up health care expenses.

Robert Romano of Americans for Limited Government recently noted that Congress has already had to raise the ceiling on the national debt to more than \$14 trillion. The president's 10-year budget plan calls for Congress to add another \$10.6 trillion to that by 2020.

The last thing in the world Americans need is a gigantic new entitlement program that would eventually break the private insurance system and force people to accept government-run health care.

Congress has lowballed the costs of every health care program it has ever created - Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Liberal Democrats want to hide all their red ink by losing it in a vastly greater sea of deficit spending.

No.

Reps. Nick Rahall and Alan Mollohan, and Sens. Robert Byrd and Jay Rockefeller, do not work for their party. They work for their constituents.

A majority of Americans oppose this bill. They hate slimy congressional maneuvers even more.

Congress should start over.