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Beware 'Healthy Americans Act,' or 'Wyden-Bennett' – the Most Dangerous Health Care Bill Ever

Dennis B. Cooke, MD

Lurking in the wings, behind all the noise around the Baucus bill and the endless appearances by Obama, is another health care bill that has been given little attention. A deeply flawed bill, this worrisome legislation appears to be waiting in the background. The **Healthy Americans Act** (HHA), or Wyden-Bennett, was re-introduced to Congress in February, 2009. Written by Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden (D) and Utah Sen. Bob Bennett (R), it has a bi-partisan group of co-sponsors in the Senate.

Will Wyden-Bennett be trotted out as another "grand compromise" piece of legislation? A coalition of Senators from both sides of the aisle may very well intend to ride in on their white horses with a massive public relations campaign in hopes of convincing the American people they have listened to our outrage. They are already saying they have crafted a bipartisan solution to America's health care problems that offers universal coverage while preserving the free market. **Sen. Wyden says his plan will be the one**, speaking at a meeting with directors of the Pima County Medical Society in Oregon in May, 2009

The truth is Wyden-Bennett is a backdoor takeover by Congress of the entire insurance marketplace. The result would lead to a complete nationalization of our health care system. It may well be the bill Obama and members of the United States Congress have intended to legislate all along.

Wyden-Bennett is the most overreaching and dangerous threat to our liberties of any of the bills in existence.

The Healthy Americans Act is the plan former Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy endorsed from the very beginning

of the health care debate. Candidate Senator Hillary Clinton **said** she would sign this bill if she was elected president. Interesting endorsements for a supposedly free-market plan!

Under Wyden-Bennett, the insurance market is 100 percent regulated by the federal government. This **plan** mandates Congressional approval of all [insurance plans](#) including the premiums the [insurance companies](#) may charge. The government will approve or disapprove [insurance claims](#).

The insurance companies as we know them today will exist in name only to promote the façade of a free market. They will only exist as purveyors of nationalized health care. With only government improved plans and premiums, the incentive for innovation and competition in the insurance market will be crippled.

Make no mistake: The private plan you enjoy now will be gone. The **standard benefits package** will be the [BlueCross/BlueShield Plan](#) in the [Federal Employees Health Benefits Program](#) (FEHBP). This plan is designed for older, financially secure federal employees. The average 2009 **family premium** is \$13,440 per year.

Under federal mandate all Americans will be **forced** to buy the FEHBP as their minimum allowable coverage. The ability of the insurance company to offer any lesser coverage will be gone – the needs and wants of the individual will no longer be taken into consideration. The young healthy individual, with a lower salary and little need for extensive benefits, will be forced to purchase the same policy, at the same premium, as an older life-long smoker or diabetic. In effect he will be subsidizing their care. Many young Obama supporters are going to be very unhappy with this plan.

Michael F. Cannon, Director of the Health Policy Studies at the CATO Institute, **states** that 30-50 percent of Americans will be forced to pay more than they need or want for health care in order to subsidize others. Often those others may be people that have chosen unhealthy lifestyles.

The **penalty** for failure to comply will be the average monthly premium plus 15 percent for each uncovered month.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will **expand** further into our personal lives. The premium will be taken out of paychecks, thus removing any transparency from the system and diminishing the consumer's ability to make responsible choices. The IRS will be in charge of all collections, disbursements and the garnishing of wages for penalties. Checks for claims, payments for hospitals, clinics and health care providers will be written by the [Internal Revenue Service](#) (IRS) and administered through the sham insurance carriers. The IRS may **collect** the money for fines out of your [bank account](#).

Widen-Bennett involves the **taxation** of your government-controlled health insurance plans up to 25 percent and other **taxes**, including many deceptively hidden ones. Another attack on innovation will come from an exorbitant tax on device and drug companies doing research and development.

Proponents say this bill will deliver a “revenue neutral” plan. However, you may rest assured it will only remain so by raising the cost of the premiums you will be forced to pay over the years or by reducing the number of services covered in policies.

HAA is almost identical to the Massachusetts [Health care plan](#) Kennedy touted. The cost of family health care premiums in Massachusetts are the highest in the nation, **projected** to rise to \$26,370 per year by 2020, according to the Commonwealth Foundation. **According** to the Mr. Cannon at the Cato Institute, Health care costs in Massachusetts have risen 60 percent over what they would have if no reform had been passed. He reports the average wait time in Boston to see a specialist is 50 days – 29 days longer than the average in most American cities, even though there are more doctors per capita.

Imagine the extraordinary costs under this possible scenario.

American taxpayers will be subsidizing the premiums of those up to 400 percent above the poverty line. Already

Americans are upset with the costs of the health care plans in the forefront of the debate. If amnesty is passed, as Congress intends, Americans will be forced to subsidize the 12-20 million predominantly low-skilled illegal aliens that are already in this country and the many millions more of their relatives that will enter this country through chain migration.

Who Stands to Benefit from Wyden-Bennett

The beneficiaries of this plan will be the elected officials in Washington, D.C. who will be lining their already deep pockets with more lobbying **money**. No thought will be given to the effectiveness of the treatments covered in the plans but instead lobbyists will line up to promote their devices and services in the same way Medicare is handled now. Efficacy of care will be thrown out the window with our freedom to choose our coverage.

Leftist Sen. Ron Wyden introduced the bill in the Senate **Finance** Committee along with Utah Republican Sen. Bob Bennett. Wyden, an attorney, hails from a state that has a government-run public option. Recently, a 64-year-old **cancer survivor died** because her Oregon government plan did not cover a potentially life-saving drug, prescribed by her doctor who thought it had a good chance of helping her survive. Her government option was a \$50 assisted suicide pill. Wyden wants Oregon care for all Americans and this plan will deliver it when cost dictates force cuts in benefits.

Sen. Bennett has always wanted to nationalize health care. He was enamored with HillaryCare in the 1990s until he was forced to go along with the other members of the party in opposition because of the strong resistance of the American people. So anxious is he to institute a government takeover, he is willing to lie to achieve this goal by pretending the free market principles are being applied to the insurance marketplace.

Four other RINOs, Republicans-In-Name-Only, have joined Democrats to co-sponsor the Healthy Americans Act (S 391). The RINOs on the Senate Finance committee who have so far formally given support by signing on as co-sponsors of the bill are Lindsay Graham (SC), Michael Crapo (ID), Lamar Alexander (TN), and Judd Gregg (NH).

The lack of integrity demonstrated by the Republicans and Democrats who are co-sponsoring and supporting this government takeover of health care is matched by the lack of respect they demonstrate for the American people who have spoken loudly against more government intervention in the system. They either still believe "we the people" are stupid or complacent.

If their intention is to lie about Wyden-Bennett and sell it as a necessary "compromise" that satisfies the concerns of the American people, they have another think coming.

Rahm Emanuel Claims that Health Reform Will Pass Both Houses of Congress Before the Thanksgiving Recess on Charlie Rose, September 24, 2009.

*FamilySecurityMatters.org Contributing Editor Dr. Dennis B. Cooke practices Interventional Cardiology in the northwest. He has also written for **American Thinker**.*

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