

# Blog Watch

« Foggy Future for Senate Bill

## Blog Post Gets Four Stars From The White House

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Politico's [Mike Allen](#) reports this morning that the Obama Administration is labelling a [blog post](#) from the Atlantic's Ron Brownstein "required reading." Brownstein's thesis: the Senate bill contains plenty of cost control measures.

A key passage that probably caught the President's eye: optimism from MIT economist Jonathan Gruber: "They really make the best effort anyone has ever made. Everything is in here....I can't think of anything I'd do that they are not doing in the bill. You couldn't have done better than they are doing."

The only other [item](#) like Brownstein's said to have [circulated the West Wing](#) in recent months was from physician and New Yorker staff writer Atul Gawande, and zeroed in on one particularly high-cost town in Texas.

The [New Republic's](#) Jonathan Cohn thinks these the buzz surrounding these two pieces "is one more signal from the White House that it considers cost control a priority—a message it has been sending privately, during negotiations with Congress and interest groups, from day one."

Perhaps Brownstein's piece also held the administration's attention because he so clearly articulated possible cost-controls in the bill, which have been under attack for months.

Opponents aren't backing down, though. Take Cato's Michael Cannon, for instance, who has started [tweeting](#) the following everyday:

Today marks 158 days of Congress  
considering [#ObamaCare](#) without a full  
cost estimate. <http://bit.ly/7HqEuK>  
[#hcr](#) [#tlot](#) [#tcot](#) [#senatedebate](#)

about 2 hours ago from web

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mfcannon

Michael F. Cannon

Cannon's [piece](#) argues that the true cost of the bills are unknown. He believes, because there is a requirement in the bills that individuals have to buy health insurance, the Congressional Budget Office should count the cost of the premiums as part of the cost of the bill. He says the CBO did that for President Clinton's bill in 1994 — and it was called "devastating" by then Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala. Cannon says, "So while the CBO estimates that the coverage expansions in the House Democrats' legislation would trigger about \$1 trillion of new federal spending over ten years, the actual cost of those coverage expansions is more like \$2.5 trillion."

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