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- Rude 'piggy'
- Pol pushes to ban fish pedicures
- JFK hijacker behind bars - after 40 yrs.

Page Six



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Gossip Celeb Photos PopWrap

Sports



Yanks in ALCS
MINNEAPOLIS -- Alex Rodriguez wrapped his dock rope of a left arm...

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Story

Redistributing health

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The public is catching on

By ALAN REYNOLDS
Last Updated: 10:41 AM, October 12, 2009
Posted: 4:59 AM, October 12, 2009

PROPOSERS of compulsory, government-designed health insurance can't seem to understand why others disagree. Perhaps the public is realizing that these proposals are fundamentally about redistributing health?

Health-care "reform," that is, aims to shift costs and benefits of health insurance from some groups to others. And the losers are turning out to be less docile than politicians had hoped.

All the leading proposals involve massive redistribution from people with healthy lifestyles to those who take more risks. As the [Congressional Budget Office](#) explained, "Premiums in the new insurance exchanges would tend to be higher than the average premiums in the current-law individual market . . . because the new policies would have to cover pre-existing medical conditions and could not deny coverage to people with high expected costs for health care."

That is, because the politicians want people who've already fallen ill to be able to buy insurance at the same rates as the healthy, rates would rise for everyone who has insurance now. That's why the bills would all force healthy people to buy this overpriced insurance, under threat of fines or prison.

There would also be redistribution from people with employer-paid insurance (particularly in risky jobs with high premiums) to those who would be induced to shun such benefits in order to qualify for taxpayer subsidies.

By far the largest redistribution, however, is from those on Medicare to those who'd become newly eligible for Medicaid or federal subsidies.

The major proposals, the [AARP](#) Bulletin explains, "include around \$500 billion in savings carved from future growth in Medicare spending over a 10-year period."

Even in the Obama era, \$500 billion is a lot. Yet we're supposed to believe that less is somehow more -- that seniors will benefit from these spending cuts. "The Obama administration and congressional leaders," intones a recent New York Times editorial, "are hoping to save hundreds of billions of dollars by slowing the growth of spending in the vast and inefficient Medicare system that serves 45 million older and disabled Americans. The savings would be used to help offset the costs of covering tens of millions of uninsured people."



Cutting bone: Sen. Max Baucus and other Democrats want to slash \$500 billion from Medicare.

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President Obama, in an Aug. 16 Times op ed, made such redistribution seem easy and painless: "We'll cut hundreds of billions of dollars in

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Such efforts to appease seniors are not working because they are transparently dishonest.

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10/12/2009 12:38 PM

If they are willing to redistribute wealthy why not healthy too. Those who understand simply math should know you can "save" \$500 BILLION out of a program that is already going bankrupt. As for the insurance changes maybe they will next have car insurance be sold to all at the same price despite how many accidents or drunk driving arrest the person has. Insurance is about dealing with financial risk not just paying the the bills these folks want to keep running up.

TexKen

Report Abuse

10/12/2009 7:36 AM

The inane chicanery of government has surpassed every form of acceptance. Where and to whom do we apply to have these people removed for breaking their oathes of office like the POTUS's below?

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