

Dear Washington,

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Driving the Conversation:

Arena Ref: [Fred Barbash](#)

The Health Care Arena

Moment of truth-not to mention consequences-in the House

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Roger Pilon

Vice President for Legal Affairs, Cato Institute :

In [his post below](#), my colleague Michael Cannon links to his devastating analysis of the way House Democrats have buried the true cost of their health-care scheme. This is legerdemain of the first order, but it is business as usual here in Washington. Here we have a Congress that cannot fix Medicare, which will go broke even before Social Security does, a Congress that still hasn't met the October 1 budget deadline for the ninth year in a row, and it wants to fundamentally reorder health care in America with a scheme that no one understands and no one knows how to fund. Any private business that ran its affairs that way would long have been out of business.

Given this record of insanity, therefore, it is impossible to say whether the House this weekend will pass this 1,990-page monstrosity of a bill -- whether enough sanity will come to enough members to kill the bill. One datum does loom large, however: Speaker Pelosi can afford to lose no more than 40 members of her caucus. Combine that, after Tuesday's election results, with another datum -- there are 49 House Democrats who sit in districts that John McCain carried -- and one has to ask whether the insanity we see before us reaches to political suicide.

Yet whatever happens tomorrow, or in the Senate down the road, this cannot go on, simply because the money isn't there to allow it to go on. On Tuesday at the polls and yesterday with the huge demonstration in front of the Capitol we are seeing what Charles Krauthammer

this morning rightly calls the demolition of "the great realignment myth of 2008." America is not a suicidal nation. The Founders and Framers gave us institutions that have endured for over two centuries and are the envy of the world. Whatever happens tomorrow, the seeds of sanity are in the American soil and soon will be springing forth.

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