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Health Issues

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BAD MEDICINE: A GUIDE TO THE REAL COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE NEW HEALTH CARE LAW

The length and complexity of President Obama's health care reform bill, combined with a debate that often generated more heat than light, has led to massive confusion about the law's likely impact. But, it is now possible to analyze what is and is not in it, what it likely will and will not do, says Michael D. Tanner, a senior fellow with the Cato Institute.

For example:

- While the new law will increase the number of Americans with insurance coverage, it falls significantly short of universal coverage; by 2019, roughly 21 million Americans will still be uninsured.
- The legislation will cost far more than advertised, more than \$2.7 trillion over 10 years of full implementation, and will add \$352 billion to the national debt over that period.
- Most American workers and businesses will see little or no change in their skyrocketing insurance costs, while millions of others will actually see their premiums go up faster as a result of this legislation.

Other consequences include:

- The new law will increase taxes by more than \$669 billion between now and 2019, and the burdens it places on business will significantly reduce economic growth and employment.
- While the law contains few direct provisions for rationing care, it nonetheless sets the stage for government rationing and interference with how doctors practice medicine.
- Millions of Americans who are happy with their current health insurance will not be able to keep it.

In short, the more we learn about what is in this new law, the more it looks like bad news for American taxpayers, businesses, health care providers and patients, says Tanner.

Source: Michael D. Tanner, "Bad Medicine: A Guide to the Real Costs and Consequences of the New Health Care Law," Cato Institute, July 12, 2010.

For text:

http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=11961

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