

## Gov't healthcare plantation looms

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Parker

What is now being billed as healthcare reform is but the latest chapter in a process I described in an earlier column as "[Back on Uncle Sam's Plantation.](#)"

Rather than moving dysfunctional America off the welfare state, as we did with welfare reform in 1996, we are now moving the free, functioning, and once prosperous part of our nation onto the welfare state.

Bills out of committees in both the House and the Senate contain all the elements of President Obama's dream to get as many Americans onto the government healthcare plantation as possible.

We've got creation of the new government-run insurance plan that supposedly will create new competition. We've got fines on employers who don't provide insurance and fines on individuals who don't buy it.

And we've got the trillions of dollars in new spending to subsidize insurance purchases for low- to middle-income Americans and expand Medicaid to get more low-income Americans into it.

And, of course, we've got the massive new government bureaucracy to oversee it all.

*Read Michelle Malkin's column: [Inside the monstrous Obamacare bureaucracy](#)*

Obama continues to tell the many millions of Americans currently insured through their employer not to worry, that "If you like your healthcare plan you can keep that..."

But we know this is a slight of hand. Many employers will gladly pay the fine and purge their employees into the government plan. And how will private plans possibly compete with the government plan when politicians can reach into taxpayer pockets anytime they want to keep on subsidizing it?

The Lewin Group estimates that 120 million Americans may be driven into the government plan.

And the idea that a government plan will keep, in the words of our president, "insurance companies honest"?

We've already got half the country on government healthcare through Medicare and Medicaid.

Harvard's Malcom Sparrow, a specialist in healthcare fraud, estimates annual Medicare fraud at \$85 billion. The Government Accountability Office estimates Medicaid fraud at around \$33 billion annually.

**So that's \$120 billion a year in government healthcare fraud! This is who will keep private companies "honest?"**

It defies logic and experience that we will save money and deliver better healthcare by expanding government control and spending.

Congressional Budget Office head Douglas Elmendorf confirms as such. CBO now estimates this proposed reform will require a trillion dollars in new expenditures and that rather than lowering the "cost curve", "the curve is being raised."

Despite all this, this horrible legislation may pass. Why?

We now have the political reality of decisive Democrat majorities in both houses of Congress and a Democrat president that wants this.

And whereas business fought "Hillary care," they are now cooperating. With Democrats decisively running the show, they can buy political support with bribes and threats.

Pharmaceutical firms and insurance firms like the idea of new expanded taxpayer-subsidized markets.

And doctors? The American Medical Association initially refused to endorse healthcare reform that included a government plan.

Now suddenly they are on board. The AMA has come out in support of the House bill with a government plan. What happened? The House agreed to get rid of planned cuts in doctor's Medicare reimbursements.

***Halfway into 2009, Americans have turned more control of their lives over to government and politicians than ever before in history.***

This proposed healthcare reform, through subsidies and expansion of Medicaid, would put tens of millions of new Americans on welfare. The result is predictable: many more citizens with incentives to stay poor and dependent.

The rest of us will transfer a major part of our freedom to manage our own private lives over to bureaucrats.

I'm praying for a miracle that will wake up a slumbering nation.

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