

Why I Dislike/ Like the ACA

The Affordable Care Act, the ACA, known to just about everybody as Obamacare is about half implemented. I always refer to it as the Affordable Care Act, and I wish others would also. Each state may administer their form of the ACA, and incorporate health care for low income folks (an extension of Medicaid) not eligible for ACA benefits using federal funds (for a limited number of years). Many states have chosen not to participate (in the ACA), and several have refused federal funding to residents of their state not qualified for the federal ACA benefits.

Covered California is what it is called here in our state. "In theory," the Act broadens the base, reduces emergency room and other high cost urgent care visits, establishes prevention programs and normalizes rate fees. As a recipient, like many others affected by it, I can tell you why we all should like as well as dislike the ACA.

First, affordable health care and a system to deliver it should have been implemented long ago. As the wealthiest, most industrially advanced nation in the world, the U.S. has a moral obligation to never let citizens within our borders go without food, access to education or to suffer from a treatable physical or mental illness.

Teddy Roosevelt, a Republican, supported universal health insurance (care), 100 plus years ago! He believed that a country could not be strong if their people are sick. We would not allow a fellow American to go hungry, why would we ever allow anyone to suffer unnecessarily from a treatable adverse health condition?

As we all know the ACA was passed with only partisan support - a recipe for failed policy decisions. The battle cry of one political party is that the ACA will be a job killer. Yet it will most likely save many, maybe millions of lives by providing preventable and treatable healthcare. That there is even an argument cannot really be justified.

The political party I respected and was a member of all my adult life has spawned some of our greatest leaders. Now on this issue, they have become mere bystanders. Public policy-making is just that. It's not "political party" policy-making and not "special interest" policy-making.

Second, hospitals, health providers, pharmaceutical companies and insurance companies should not grasp this opportunity to increase their bottom line. Instead, they should recognize that providing affordable, quality health care is a moral obligation. And providing that care at the highest quality available and at the lowest cost should be their goal.

A bandage placed on the wound of an injured person should cost no more than what it could be purchased for at a drug store. Health care personnel, (the backbone of the system whom I greatly admire) should be competitively compensated, no more no less.

Most important, in my opinion, we collectively have an obligation, especially to those receiving taxpayer money, to fund their individual health care needs to stay fit and keep healthy. Additionally, we should

do what we can to avoid unhealthy habits and situations. Taxpayers should not be burdened by those who have the ability to lessen unnecessary costs by practicing the latter.

I am no left-of-center economic, collective socialist. Nor do I agree with some of the Democrat and Republican authoritarian ideology. Just read my past commentaries. A healthy free market is better than one that is tampered with, and personal choice is better than one which is dictated. Like many of you, I am a middle of the road, common sense, independent voting citizen. But making health care affordable to everyone is as important as nourishing the body and mind.

It is going to take all of us working together. Lawmakers can make changes, compromise and improve the Act if necessary. Health providers must concentrate on high quality, affordable services. Their bottom line will take care of itself. You and I must keep fit and healthy. It will work far into our future, and we owe it to those who come after us.

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