A WEEKLY WASHINGTON UPDATE

CAPITOL CONNECTION

CONGRESSMAN GARY G. MILLER
CALIFORNIA'S 42ND DISTRICT

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No Celebration for this Anniversary: President's Costly Health Law Enacted Two Years Ago

On this day two years ago, President Obama's massive takeover of our nation's health care system was enacted into law. Despite rosy predictions of lower health costs, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects that the law's new benefit mandates will force premiums in the individual market to rise by $2,100 per family. In addition to rising costs for American workers and their families, the law will also impose a massive cost on our economy. Last week, the CBO released a new estimate showing that the health care overhaul will cost nearly $1.8 trillion over the next decade. That cost is expected to soar above $2 trillion once the law's expansion of Medicaid and taxpayer-funded health insurance subsidies are fully implemented.

As for the explicit pledge from the President that those who like their health care plan would be able to keep it, the CBO shows that the so-called Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) will actually force millions of Americans to lose their current health coverage. The budget office estimates that by 2016, five million Americans will lose the health insurance they have through their employer, a number that could reach as high as 20 million. Even the Obama Administration itself has estimated that the law's regulations and mandates will force up to 80% of our country's small businesses to drop their current plans. As the Supreme Court begins considering constitutional challenges to the PPACA next week, Congressman Miller will continue working in Congress to bring the government takeover of our nation's health care system to an end.

House Votes to Repeal Health Law's Rationing Board, Institute Medical Liability Reform

On Thursday, the House voted to repeal one of the most egregious aspects of the President's health care law. Under the PPACA, a board of unelected bureaucrats will have a tremendous amount of power in determining Medicare spending, including payment rates to physicians treating our nation's seniors. Recommendations to cut Medicare spending issued by the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) – which has no requirement to hold public meetings or seek public input on its proposals – will automatically become law unless Congress enacts other cost-reduction measures. While the goal of reigning in health costs is laudable, PPACA and its unaccountable rationing board is exactly the wrong prescription for our nation's unsustainable health care spending.

H.R. 5, the Protecting Access to Healthcare (PATH) Act, would repeal the IPAB, leaving intact taxpayers' ability to hold their elected representatives responsible for policies that impact senior access to quality care. In addition to eliminating the unaccountable IPAB, the PATH Act institutes medical liability reform. Current abuse of the system is forcing health costs to rise, sending medical malpractice insurance premiums soaring and forcing medical providers to perform unnecessary and costly tests and procedures to avoid potential lawsuits. The PATH Act ensures that patients who have been legitimately harmed have legal recourse to file and settle medical malpractice claims, while taking important steps to reform the current system. This includes establishing caps on non-economic damages, curtailing attorney fees, and establishing a statute of limitations for filing suits. Congressman Miller voted for H.R. 5 to restore congressional oversight over Medicare policies that will impact senior access to care and reform our country's broken medical malpractice laws.

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