



Free Congress Foundation Commentary

Thanksgiving For A Socialist Turkey?

By Marion Edwyn Harrison, Esq.

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Last Saturday night the United States Senate voted 60 - 39 to open debate on the health-care bill which originated in the House of Representatives as HR 3962. Perhaps part of the moral is that the Senate should not legislate on Saturday night (and the House had done the same thing, same subject). However, the Senate did, furthering the already expansive media coverage and apparently widespread public disapproval of the legislation. The Senate Majority Leader's stated goal now is final enactment as a Christmas present - to socialism? President Barack Hussein Obama undoubtedly would sign the bill.

Meanwhile, the staff of Senator Thomas Allen (Tom) Coburn, M.D. (R-OK) has compiled some figures. A few may be amusing. In the aggregate they are appalling. Senator Coburn, of course, is a dedicated and resolute opponent of the excessive, unprecedented and unwarranted spending of taxpayers' money. His background includes not only medical practice but also small-business experience.

The Coburn figures follow. Perhaps they should be read after Thursday lest they ruin one's Thanksgiving celebration. The editorial comments are mine.

Eight new taxes are to result from the law, according to one reputable analysis.

The bill as pending in the Senate contains 2,074 pages (as though the 1,991 in the original House bill did not constitute sufficient confusion), 13 of which are table of contents pages, and its paper weight is 20.8 pounds. Are 70 new Federal programs enough? The prospect of a busy - socialistically officious? - Secretary of Health and Human Services: 1,697 times she is granted authority to create, determine, define language in the proposed law. A mere 3,067 mandates - that is, usage of "shall . . ."

How about some real dollars?

Some 34 million people are to be without health insurance. Yet the cost per word to taxpayers is about \$ 6.8 million or \$ 1.2 billion per page - a startling, if strange, way to count. The Internal Revenue Service may require additional appropriations of \$ 5 - 10 billion to implement the IRS taxing requirements. Uninsured people would pay about \$ 8 billion in additional taxes. Medicaid mandates upon States of the Union would cost \$ 25 billion. Employers not offering their employees Federally approved insurance would be taxed an additional \$ 28 billion. Estimates of annual fraud in Medicare and Medicaid are \$ 100 billion, with cuts to Medicare Advantage of \$ 188 billion and to Medicare of \$ 465 billion, with total Federal tax collections of another \$ 494 billion.

The total cost for full implementation of the Federal medical program would be \$ 2.5 trillion. Our national debt is reckoned by many as \$ 12 trillion, by some as greater or potentially greater.

The slang negative meaning of the noun *turkey* comes to mind. What a turkey for Thanksgiving!

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