

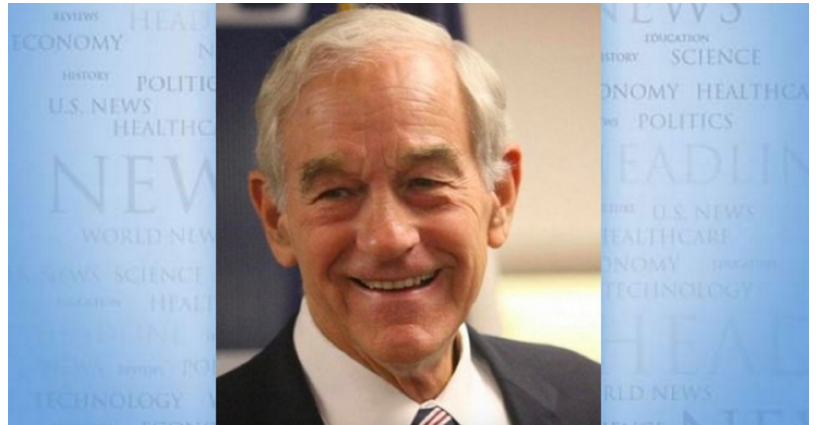


Written by [Ron Paul](#) on June 26, 2017

Republican Healthcare Plan Fails the ‘Jimmy Kimmel Test’

Last week the Senate Republican leadership unveiled its Obamacare replacement plan. Like its House counterpart, the misnamed Senate plan retains most of Obamacare’s core features.

Both the House and Senate plans allow states to obtain waivers providing relief from some Obamacare mandates, although the waivers in both bills are too restrictive to be of much value. For example, the Senate’s bill does not allow states to have waived two of Obamacare’s most destructive mandates — guaranteed issue and community ratings.



The healthcare debate is dominated by emotional rhetoric about how government-run healthcare is necessary to protect the vulnerable. For example, in May, *Jimmy Kimmel Live* host Jimmy Kimmel delivered a touching monologue about his newborn son’s open-heart surgery. Mr. Kimmel ended his monologue with a plea to retain Obamacare so all children can obtain life-saving treatment. After the monologue became a national sensation, many suggested that any Obamacare replacement plan be judged by a “Jimmy Kimmel test.”

Every decent human being supports a healthcare system that ensures children have access to medical care. However, this does not mean every decent person should support government-run healthcare. In fact decent people should oppose all forms of nationalized medicine.

Government intervention in healthcare distorts the marketplace with mandates, subsidies, and price controls. As is the case with any goods or services, price controls in healthcare result in shortages and even price increases as providers look for ways to offset their losses caused by the controls. This is why many Americans have seen their health insurance premiums skyrocket under Obamacare.

Government-run healthcare can be deadly. Anyone who doubts this should consider the case of Laura Hillier, an 18 year-old Canadian who passed away from leukemia while on a government medical treatment wait list. This is one of many horror stories from Canada, and other countries with nationalized healthcare, of individuals who died while waiting for their turn to receive medical treatment.

One need not look to Canada to find casualties of government intervention in healthcare. In 2013 Sarah Murnaghan, a ten-year-old cystic fibrosis patient, almost died because of federal rules forbidding children her age from receiving organ transplants. Public outcry eventually forced the government to allow Sarah to receive the transplant, but how many Sarahs have died because of government organ transplant rules?

The Jimmy Kimmel test is a valid way to evaluate healthcare proposals. However, there should also be a Laura Hillier or Sarah Murnaghan test forbidding adoption of a new healthcare system that increases healthcare costs, creates healthcare shortages, or allows government to deny anyone access to healthcare.



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The free market meets all these tests. In a free market, doctors voluntarily donate their time to help those in need, while private charities and churches fund charity hospitals and clinics. Such a system flourished in the days before Medicaid and Medicare, and would quickly return if the welfare state is eliminated.

Congress should be working to repeal all federal interference in healthcare, including by shutting down the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA raises the cost of medicine, denies Americans access to effective treatments, and prevents individuals from learning about cost-effective ways to improve their health.

Unfortunately, a Congress that so quickly abandons its promise to repeal and replace Obamacare will not restore free-market healthcare — or otherwise reduce the welfare-warfare state — unless forced to do so by an economic crisis or demands from a critical mass of pro-liberty Americans.

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.



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