



## All They Want for Christmas Is Nationalized Healthcare

With a special delivery due at the White House by Christmas, Senators have a lot more on their plates than just turkey and cranberry sauce. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) committed Monday to opening debate this week on a healthcare bill, notwithstanding the seemingly insuperable procedural obstacles some members of his own party have promised to place along the path.



In order to obviate a filibuster, Reid needs 60 votes in favor of initiating floor consideration of the scheme by the upper chamber. Realizing that this level of support will be hard to come by, Reid has warned reluctant Democrats that if he doesn't quickly assemble his 60-man roster, then legislators can expect to work day and night, weekdays and weekends, right up to the Thanksgiving holiday break.

Even if Reid gets his Christmas miracle and somehow shepherds a bill onto the floor of the Senate, Republicans opposed to the measure have vowed to weigh it down with amendments, each of which will require independent review, debate, and vote. "This will be on the floor for quite a long time," promised Republican Senator Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.).

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McConnell and other Republican senators in anticipation of deliberation on a healthcare reform package are pointing out a panoply of potential tax increases to individuals and corporations that will be imposed to finance a new healthcare bureaucracy. Apart from the proposals reported last week in *The New American*, on Monday determined Senators were still scrambling to find funds and settled on prescription drug makers, insurance companies, and medical equipment manufacturers as likely targets. These new imposts are in addition to the higher Medicare payroll tax, the so-called "Cadillac tax" (a 40-percent tax on insurance premiums above \$8,000 for individuals and \$21,000 for families), and the tax hikes contained in the version of healthcare overhaul recently passed by the House of Representatives.

This insidious plot to sneak extortionate tax increases in through the Trojan Horse of healthcare "reform" is anathema to the promised resuscitation of the middle class that has been eviscerated by predatory economic policies that have hunted this already endangered segment of society nearly into extinction.

Among those Americans already living paycheck to paycheck, there is rising fear that, if for a change, President Obama decides to keep a campaign pledge and allow Bush-era tax cuts to expire in 2011 as currently scheduled, then the top income tax rate would immediately jump to 39 percent without taking



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on November 17, 2009

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new health care taxes into consideration, and to a jaw-dropping 45 percent with them. Moreover, according to a study conducted by the Tax Foundation, a D.C.-based tax policy group, if any of the currently proposed health care programs are enacted, then “taxpayers in 39 states could pay a top tax rate higher than 50% by 2011.”

Fortunately, there is yet time for Americans to derail the nationalization of the healthcare industry. Those opposed to the move must demand that like-minded Senators unite unwaveringly in their opposition to the plans of Senator Reid, Speaker Pelosi, and President Obama. If action is taken quickly and voices are raised loudly and consistently focused singly and steadfastly on the Constitution and its enumeration of specific and limited congressional powers, then in a couple of weeks the enervated and demoralized American middle class might yet have something for which it can be truly thankful: freedom.

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