



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on April 11, 2011

Boxer Comes Out Swinging Against IRS as “Healthcare Policeman”

Sen. Barbara Boxer can’t decide whether she wants the Internal Revenue Service to police Americans’ healthcare decisions or not.

The California Democrat voted in favor of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (aka ObamaCare) and even made a [speech](#) at the signing ceremony, calling the law “a historic achievement and a victory for our seniors, our children, our small businesses and for California.” The act requires every American to purchase government-approved health insurance or incur a penalty. The IRS is charged with enforcing the individual mandate by withholding tax refunds from those who run afoul of the mandate. In other words, the IRS is now America’s healthcare cop. Boxer apparently has no problem with this state of affairs.



She does, however, have a problem with the IRS as healthcare cop when it comes to one of her signature issues: abortion. Speaking at a pro-legalized abortion rally in Washington on April 7, Boxer denounced the [No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act](#) currently wending its way through the House of Representatives.

Introduced by Rep. Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) and cosponsored by 227 other congressmen, including several Democrats, the bill’s stated purpose is “to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions and to provide for conscience protections, and for other purposes.” Essentially, it makes the Hyde Amendment, which bans federal funding of abortions except in certain limited circumstances, the permanent law of the land, instead of requiring the amendment to be passed by Congress annually. In addition, it prohibits the federal government from paying for “health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion,” thereby codifying President Barack Obama’s verbal pledge that under his healthcare law the federal government would not be funding abortion coverage. It further protects healthcare providers from discrimination by the federal government on the basis of any provider’s refusal to “provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions.”

Undoubtedly Boxer finds the whole bill repugnant. She not only voted to defeat Sen. Ben Nelson’s (D-Neb.) amendment to the ObamaCare bill that would have banned federal funding of abortion coverage under that law but also is the very Senator who [moved to table the amendment](#). However, what really has her dander up about the current bill is its language prohibiting income-tax deductions for abortions or health insurance that covers abortions, to wit:



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For taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this section —

(1) no credit shall be allowed under the internal revenue laws with respect to amounts paid or incurred for an abortion or with respect to amounts paid or incurred for a health benefits plan (including premium assistance) that includes coverage of abortion,

(2) for purposes of determining any deduction for expenses paid for medical care of the taxpayer or the taxpayer's spouse or dependents, amounts paid or incurred for an abortion shall not be taken into account, and

(3) in the case of any tax-preferred trust or account the purpose of which is to pay medical expenses of the account beneficiary, any amount paid or distributed from such an account for an abortion shall be included in the gross income of such beneficiary.

This was a bridge too far for Boxer, who [told](#) the assembled abortion supporters: "We say no to another extreme bill. Listen to this one — would put the IRS in the middle of a personal or private decision by requiring millions of women who have had an abortion to disclose it to tax auditors. We say 'no.' We are not turning the IRS into a healthcare policeman."

So which is it? Is it acceptable to have the IRS policing Americans' private healthcare decisions or not? For Boxer, it seems, it all depends on which decisions are being monitored. Decisions to purchase or not to purchase health insurance are fair game; decisions to purchase health insurance that covers abortions (or to purchase abortion itself) are not. Unless they want to kill their unborn children in secret, Americans wishing to keep their healthcare choices private can hardly count on having Boxer in their corner.



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