



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 26, 2013

## HHS Secretary Wants ObamaCare for Illegals Through Citizenship Pathway

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius is [urging](#) Congress to pass immigration reform so that it may help undocumented individuals gain greater access to healthcare services. As observed by the Daily Caller in February, however, a pathway to citizenship may increase the cost of ObamaCare up to \$300 billion over a decade.



“Well, the [Obamacare] bill is crafted in such a way that those who are undocumented will not have access to the tax credits or shopping in the (health insurance) marketplace. That has been limited, which is, frankly, why — another very keen reason why we need comprehensive immigration reform,” Sebelius told a gathering of Latinos in Philadelphia. “Unfortunately, you can’t fix — we won’t fix the immigration system, unfortunately, through the health care bill, but I think having the immigration bill that passed the Senate, pass the House, would be a huge step,” Sebelius added.

Predictably, Sebelius’ remarks drew applause from the crowd.

Sebelius is right, however. Immigration reform would permit currently undocumented individuals access to ObamaCare, an addition that would be costly to the American taxpayers. The online Daily Caller [wrote](#) in February, “Any immigration package in which current illegal immigrants are made eligible for Obamacare — in the form of either exchanges or Medicaid — could increase [costs to the federal government by between \\$120 billion to \\$200 billion in its first decade, according to internal calculations by the Republican side of the Senate Budget Committee that were obtained exclusively by the Daily Caller.](#)”

Those figures are based on the assumption that the law’s provision capping a total spending on exchange subsidies will begin in 2019. If that provision was not to be enforced, the estimate increases to anywhere from \$210 billion to \$300 billion. In addition to the added cost of ObamaCare in the event that a pathway to citizenship is passed, the average American would experience a benefit cut of approximately \$1,100 annually.

And the long-term effects of adding current illegals to ObamaCare benefits are even worse. The Daily Caller reported:

Last March the minority side of the Senate Budget Committee [estimated](#) that Obamacare would



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increase unfunded obligations — or federal spending without a [dedicated funding source — for federal health care programs by \\$17 trillion over 75 years, or from \\$65 trillion to \\$82 trillion.](#)

Adding currently illegal immigrants, via a pathway to citizenship or other means, to Obamacare would further increase those unfunded obligations by another \$2 trillion, based on their calculations.

Staffers reached those estimates by using figures acquired by the Congressional Budget Office that estimates seven million illegal immigrants are without health insurance, of whom approximately 85 percent have incomes low enough to qualify for the benefits.

Sebelius seemed to disregard the added cost of ObamaCare for American taxpayers by stating that the Affordable Care Act “really is about a portion of the population (15 percent by her estimate) who is either uninsured or underinsured or in and out of the marketplaces.”

As for the other 85 percent, Sebelius asserts that they already have relatively affordable coverage, which she contends has only “gotten stronger” because of some ObamaCare provisions. “Starting October 1st of this year ... for about 15 percent of Americans who don’t have health coverage at all, they will have some new opportunities. They will have a new marketplace available to them, and because they don’t have an employer paying a share of the coverage, they have some help from the federal government.”

Of course, she made sure to mention that Latinos make up about 25 percent of those eligible for new coverage.

While illegals await a pathway to citizenship, however, Sebelius urged illegal aliens to continue to receive medical treatment at community health centers, where they will obtain federally funded, “culturally competent” health care providers “who actually speak the language and can reach out to a neighborhood.”

Sebelius went on to boast the Obama administration’s doubling the size of the Public Health Service Corps — “which, to me, is one of the great, well-kept secrets in American.”

“It’s like the Peace Corps for health workers,” she gloated. “If you agree to serve in an underserved area, the federal government helps pay off the student loans and debt that a lot of health professionals carry. And what we find is that when people actually take up service in the National Health Service Corps, they stay in the communities that they are serving long beyond their assignments. So there will be continued access for undocumented,” Sebelius promised.

Meanwhile, Sebelius was joined by Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, who also referenced the plight of those who “may not have all their documentation in order.”

But like Sebelius, Nutter pointed out that illegals continue to enjoy access to healthcare in this country. Nutter said the City of Philadelphia — “even through the worst of the recession, we did everything we possibly could to minimize any negative impact on our health centers. We have eight health centers across the City of Philadelphia, and they were last, last, last on any list to get any reductions, although we made cuts all over the city government.” Nutter added he is committed to maintaining that funding.

He also indicated that he signed an executive order to ensure that people cannot be denied service despite their “undocumented status.” “And I signed that executive order specifically to make sure that while folks are trying to deal with their paperwork and dealing with immigration and all those folks over there at the federal side, that’s not our responsibility. Our responsibility is to provide service. Anyone



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who shows up, who's in this city — (applause) — and so folks — and so people should continue to come, certainly, to our health centers.”

Nutter admits that his agenda is to see to it that the city of Philadelphia is committed to aid those who are undocumented. He said his city is “doing our best in trying to provide services to folks, notwithstanding any language challenges, documentation status. If you are here, it is our job to try to provide the best, high-quality service and care that we can as a local government. That’s our commitment.”

Apparently, even if it is at the expense of the hard-working taxpayers.

Photo of Obama with National Council of La Raza (the race) Janet Murguia: AP Images



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