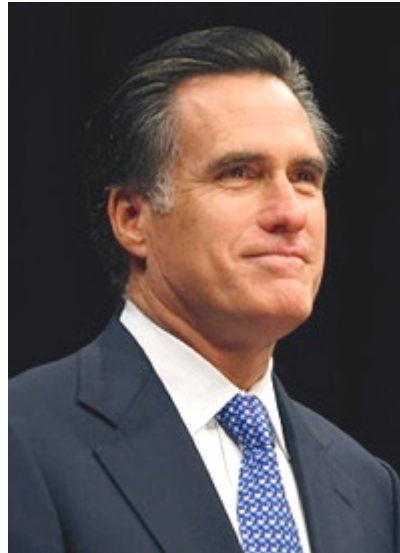




Written by [Daniel Sayani](#) on October 14, 2011

Investigation Confirms RomneyCare Was the Blueprint for ObamaCare

A recent investigation uncovered evidence that senior officials in the Obama administration unabashedly used the landmark healthcare bill of former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney (left) as the prototype for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2009, popularly referred to as ObamaCare.



Newly obtained White House records reveal that ObamaCare was modeled after RomneyCare, which was enacted in 2006 and mandates that all Massachusetts residents purchase a government-approved minimum health insurance policy. In addition, when the Obama administration was crafting the ObamaCare legislation, it even consulted the same health care experts and advisors who helped the Republican Romney administration craft its version of socialized healthcare in 2006.

The records, gleaned from White House visitor logs reviewed by NBC News, show that senior White House officials had a dozen meetings in 2009 with three health care advisers and experts who helped shape the health care reform law signed by Romney in 2006, when the Republican presidential candidate was Governor of Massachusetts. One of those meetings, on July 20, 2009, was in the Oval Office and presided over by President Barack Obama, the records show.

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The investigations confirm what authentically conservative critics of socialized health insurance have long known — that RomneyCare, and to a lesser extent, an earlier universal health care policy proposal drafted by the Republican Nixon administration in the 1970s, served as the prototypes and models for ObamaCare.

“The White House wanted to lean a lot on what we’d done in Massachusetts,” said Jon Gruber, an MIT economist who advised the Romney administration on health care and who attended five meetings at the Obama White House in 2009, including the meeting with the President. “They really wanted to know how we can take that same approach we used in Massachusetts and turn that into a national model.”

It should be noted that, further shattering Romney’s claims to conservatism, Gruber was identified in 2007 as “the Democratic Party’s most influential health care expert” by the *Washington Post*, and Gruber has generally worked with Democrats, including all three of the leading presidential candidates in 2008. Unsurprisingly, Romney’s star advisor is a firm ideologue of the Keynesian School of Economics, like his fellow M.I.T. colleague Paul Krugman. Believing that government spending can



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“stimulate” the economy and lift the nation out of deficit, he authored an [op-ed](#) entitled “Medicine for the Job Market” in the *New York Times* on December 4, 2008 arguing that even amid the economic meltdown, creating government-run health care programs would stimulate the economy.

Gruber was personally recognized by Romney for his role when he signed the health care bill into law and was later appointed by Romney as a board member to the Connector Authority. (He also was given a photograph of the signing ceremony personally signed by Romney that read: “Jonathan, with deep appreciation and congratulations. A Triumph! Mitt Romney.”)

Gruber now [says](#) he is “proud” of Romney for “sticking up for what he did in Massachusetts” but is “disappointed” about his current efforts to make distinctions between the state law and the Affordable Care Act. The DNC’s favorite health economist also says that Romney is the “father of healthcare reform”:

I think he is the single person most responsible for health care reform in the United States. ... I’m not trying to make a political position or a political statement. I honestly feel that way. If Mitt Romney had not stood up for this reform in Massachusetts ... I don’t think it would have happened nationally. So I think he really is the guy with whom it all starts.

The Obama administration also hired Jon Kingsdale, who was appointed by Romney to serve as the first director of the Massachusetts Health Insurance Connector Authority. Kingsdale has been widely credited with leading the implementation of the state law — getting people to comply with the Massachusetts mandate to obtain health insurance, and setting up the Connector, a marketplace where people without employer coverage buy insurance, just as will occur on the state-based “exchanges” envisioned by the national law, according to a *Washington Post* [article](#) from April 2010.

The investigation also revealed that John McDonough played a crucial role in both RomneyCare and ObamaCare. [McDonough](#), a confidante of Ted Kennedy, formerly led the chief lobby for RomneyCare, Health Care for All, and quipped that ObamaCare is merely RomneyCare “with three more zeroes.”

Unsurprisingly, when RomneyCare passed the Massachusetts legislature, it was hailed as a national breakthrough when Romney signed it an elaborate ceremony — complete with a fife and drum band — at Boston’s historic Faneuil Hall on April 12, 2006. In addition, the late Sen. Ted Kennedy, who long advocated for socialized health care, was honored by Romney at the signing. Kennedy warmly praised Romney at the event, saying, “You’ve led the way over the long and winding path to this moment.” Romney himself touted the historic significance of the act. “Massachusetts once again is taking a giant leap forward,” he said at the signing ceremony.

NBC’s Michael Isikoff [reports](#):

Asked about about the White House records Tuesday at a press conference announcing New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie’s endorsement, Romney said the people involved in the White House meetings were “consultants,” not “aides.” He added that “one person [Obama] should have talked to was me.”

The response echoed comments that Romney made last April after Obama suggested the White House had borrowed from his law in Massachusetts.

“He does me the great favor of saying that I was the inspiration of his plan,” Romney said of Obama. “If that’s the case, why didn’t you call me? ...Why didn’t you ask what was wrong? Why didn’t you ask if this was an experiment, what worked and what didn’t. ... I would have told him,



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‘What you’re doing, Mr. President, is going to bankrupt us.’”

The parallels between ObamaCare and RomneyCare are nonetheless striking. The key features of RomneyCare were written into the national legislation, including an individual mandate, which required state residents to purchase health insurance or face a tax penalty — and the creation of a state agency to help the uninsured to purchase private health insurance plans at reasonable costs. Indeed, even Obama’s closest advisor, David Axelrod, admitted that “we got some good ideas from him,” and in an earlier edition of his memoirs, *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness*, Romney described universal health care as follows: “We can accomplish the same thing for everyone in the country.”

Capitalizing on the revelations for political advantage, Texas Governor Rick Perry released a campaign [commercial](#) assailing Romney for the role RomneyCare played in inspiring ObamaCare. While Perry lacks an ideological commitment to health care freedom (he believes that the state has the right to dictate what individuals do with their own bodies, as revealed in his Executive Order as Governor [mandating](#) that all public schoolgirls be vaccinated against Human Papilloma Virus), his ad does correctly point out that RomneyCare had disastrous effects on Massachusetts’s economy, costing the state 18,000 jobs, raising costs by over eight billion dollars, and raising private health insurance premiums in the state by more than four billion dollars. In addition, fraud has been rampant, physician wait times have increased, and the program is expected to exceed its original cost estimates by more than two billion dollars over the coming decade. Nonetheless, Romney and his supporters claim that RomneyCare did not include tax increases, although taxes have been increased in Massachusetts in order to cover cost overruns.

The revelations are expected to further hinder Romney’s hopes of capturing the conservative electorate, who already perceive him as a left-leaning Republican, due to RomneyCare, his inconsistency on abortion, and a host of other issues.



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