



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on November 20, 2009

Senator Landrieu's \$100 Million Christmas Present

It seems Senator Harry Reid (D-Nev.) is really getting into the spirit of the holiday season. Not only has he promised President Obama that he would deliver a shiny new healthcare package to the President's desk by Christmas, but since revealing the "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act," the Senate's version of healthcare reform, it is apparent that he likes playing Santa Claus so much he has stuffed Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La.) stocking with \$100 million.



According to Section 2006 of the bill entitled, "Special Adjustment to FMAP Determination for Certain States Recovering from a Major Disaster," any state that has been declared by FEMA to be a "major disaster area" since 2004 would receive an increase of at least 25 percent in federal subsidies spent on funding that state's Medicaid plan. According to the figures released Thursday by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), this little federal gift certificate will save Louisiana (the only state that would qualify under the bill as currently written) at least \$100 million dollars in healthcare expenditures over the next 10 years.

Even for those accustomed to giving extravagant gifts (usually of other people's money) such as a Congressman, that is quite a eye-popper indeed! It isn't hard to figure out why Senator Landrieu is the recipient of such a present, however. Ever since comprehensive healthcare reform legislation was merely a sparkle in Senator Reid's eye, Landrieu has been the Grinch just waiting to swoop down and ruin Christmas for not only Senator Reid, but for President Obama and all the other Whos in Whoville. Lucky for them, however, the little sack of coins Senator Reid put in her stocking has ignited the flame of the Christmas spirit in the Louisiana lawmaker's heart, and she no longer grumbles like Ebenezer Scrooge being asked to give to the poor. As a matter of fact, she can't be effusive enough in her praise of her oh-so-generous party boss, "I don't think there are many people in the whole world other than Harry Reid who could do this," said Landrieu, speaking of pushing healthcare legislation through the Senate and onto the Oval Office.

For most big holiday spenders however, the dilemma they have to face is buying all the boys and girls on their list presents of equal or nearly equal value so as to keep everyone happy and not play favorites.



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So often there just isn't enough money to go around. Fortunately, Senator Reid isn't spending his own money (thank you, middle class) so a more discerning study of the entire text of the bill is sure to reveal similar golden gifts for a couple of other important people on Reid's list: Senator Ben Nelson of Nebraska and Senator Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas. Both these Senators, along with Landrieu, have been particularly prickly thorns in Reid's side throughout the healthcare debate, but judging from Senator Nelson's comments to reporters on Friday, he must have peeked and knows exactly what a sumptuous surprise he'll soon be unwrapping, for he has decided not to stand in the way of bringing the bill to the floor of the Senate for debate. This is contrary to Nelson's statement earlier, when he said, "Faced with a decision about whether or not to move a bill that is bad, I won't vote to move it."

With all the formerly naughty boys and girls now acting so nice, it appears that Senator Reid will bring his bill to the Senate floor on Saturday and will have the votes to overcome an expected Republican motion for cloture and will take another significant step toward fulfilling his Christmas pledge to forever change healthcare in America.



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