

Dear Patient:

“I don’t take care of Democrats, Independents or Republicans; I only take care of patients.” Up to now, the majority of “practicing” doctors have been silent and disengaged on the issue of the government health care expansion known as “The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” (Public Law 111-148).

With less than three days to read over 2,700 pages, this bill was passed by congress on a straight party line vote and signed into law by the President. Now that experts have had time to read the legislative language, as your physician, I am compelled to advise you of the negative impact on your medical care and freedom of choice.

Here are examples of what the law does to patient care:

Section 1311 - states that the Health and Human Services Secretary (HHS), who presently is a lawyer & politician, will establish the clinical protocols all physicians will be mandated to follow.

This means:

- As a patient, you will no longer be able to make your own health care decisions.
- I, as your physician, will not have the primary authority to prescribe drugs, authorize diagnostic tests/treatment and/or make swift referrals for specialist care.
- Previously independent and private healthcare decisions will be disrupted via government intervention, regulation and penalty enforcement.
- Health insurance premiums will soar due to government-imposed regulation on private insurance companies.

Sections 3002 and 3007 - describe penalties on physicians who deviate from the protocols. If our training and experience tell us to deviate from the protocols in favor of a better treatment option, we run the risk of a financial penalty and/or a poor quality rating by the government.

This means:

- The number of physicians will plummet, especially within the specialist ranks.
- The quality, efficiency and availability of healthcare will dramatically decrease.
- The United States will forfeit its position as the world’s leader in medical technology, innovation and drug development.

Medicare under the HHS Secretary. The HHS is given the authority to remove services from Medicare based on task force recommendations. This is the same task force that just recommended against the use of mammograms in women between the ages of 40-

49 because, while they save lives, they weren't "cost effective." Instead, the bill allocates tens of millions of dollars for such "crucial" items as parks and family education.

Medicare cuts start now. Americans have seen an increase in longevity and an elderly population that enjoys much more independent, active lives. The federal government will now divert funds from the care that enables this, such as hip replacements and cardiac procedures, to such "necessary" projects as a new playground.

None of the 14 doctors in the House of Representatives or the 2 physicians in the US Senate were asked for their practical opinion. Perhaps, we could have avoided many of the already realized failures in the law.

Unintended Consequences

Doctor Control - Insurance companies are faced with new regulations that slash their profits. Good, right? Well, to offset these losses, they are literally buying entire medical practices & clinics to force doctors to order fewer expensive tests. They are maintaining smaller doctor networks to regulate physicians who order too many tests and procedures. (Wall Street Journal, Gottlieb)

Do You Fear Big Oil or Big Pharma? - Now look out for Big Medicine. Hospitals around the country are gobbling up local doctors' practices and forcing doctors into salaried positions. Doctors are lining up to sell because of the cost and headache of regulations, dealing with reimbursement by your health insurance company, paying for their professional liability insurance – and now the nightmare of government-managed health care. Corporate bean counters will influence doctors on how many tests they order, the treatments they prescribe, who they refer patients to and how long they can spend with each patient – time is money after all. In essence, this new law has been the "death blow" to the honorable tradition of "private practice" medicine in America.

News Flash: Millions to Be Dumped by Company Insurance – Internal documents from AT&T, Verizon, Caterpillar, and John Deere recently requested by Congress and reviewed by Fortune Magazine, reveal what the bill's critics predicted. Many large companies are examining a course that was heretofore unthinkable, *dumping the health care coverage they provide to their workers* in exchange for paying penalty fees to the government. This would dismantle the employer-based system that has reigned since World War II. It would also seem to contradict President Obama's statements that "Americans who like their current plans could keep them." (CNN)

Medicare payments will be reduced. Specialist will experience 20% reduced fees immediately. As specialists drop out of practice, waiting times for appointments and time in the office will increase. The new regulations require we purchase, staff and manage expensive computer systems to share your records with the federal government. Overhead already takes up 60% of the cost of running a practice. Health information technology and electronic medical records are being lauded as a method to control costs and increase efficiency. The results reviewed by experts have not verified this in reality. What we do know is this system WILL be used by the government to monitor and manage physician behavior and access your personal health information.

A Final Fear – the Political Power Grab

Doctors hate being political. We fear it compromises our highest call in the Hippocratic Oath, "to put our patients well being first, above all". We can be silent no more. *Politics has now crossed the line and endangers you and all my patients.* In spite of protests by Congress and denials by the President, their version of government run health care is intended to lead to socialized medicine. *Now we have the proof.*

Any pretense that this law was not a "political" power grab toward socialism was destroyed when the Obama administration nominated Dr. Donald Berwick to be administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Department of Health and Human Services describes him as – *a man fighting to ration care and socialize medicine.*

Quotes from Dr. Berwick:

On England's socialized medicine - "I am a romantic about the [British] National Health Service; I love it. All I need to do to rediscover the romance is to look at the health care in my own country,"

With women's cancer survival rates ten percentage points higher in the U.S. than in England and over twenty points higher for men, why does he think that their government-run system is superior to our system?

On his dream Health Care System – "any health care funding plan that is just, equitable, civilized, and humane must– must– redistribute wealth from the richer among us to the poorer and less fortunate."

Dr. Berwick is a proponent of socialism and the President nominated him to manage an agency intimately involved with ***one sixth of the US economy.***

The unprecedented success of American health care was created in the crucible of the free market, where doctors, clinics and hospitals all compete to serve you. By virtually EVERY measure, Americans enjoy longer life, faster recovery, and nearly as important - greater quality of life during and after treatment for illness or accident.

Free market medicine is NOT perfect, but it IS better than all the rest. Do not let the siren song of compassion or morality persuade you that universal (i.e. socialized) health care is the right system for Americans.

Results matter.

Everywhere a government-managed system has been tried, people die sooner, wait longer, pain is greater, and new cures and therapies virtually disappear. We stand at the precipice of a new "dark age" of medicine.

America remains the last great hope of the world, not just for liberty – but also as the source of excellence in medical science, education and the undisputed leader in technology and innovation.

As your family doctor, I am asking you to please support political candidates who will

fight to follow a simple motto for the next four years: ***Defund, Repeal, & Replace.***

Defund - While it is unlikely we will be able to repeal the law until 2013, Congress, which controls government spending, can defund the most damaging sections of the law (such as the 16,000 new IRS agents who will enforce this law, the government controlled insurance exchanges and thousands of government lawyers at HHS, who will be writing additional new medical regulations).

Repeal - The 2000+ page law is so hopelessly convoluted and flawed, it is much better to repeal and start over with elements of the many proposed bills that were ignored by the White House and Congress during the legislative process.

Replace - There is no question that health insurance reform is needed. A bad law should not stop us from enacting reform that protects & empowers patients, promotes competition in the free market, and covers all Americans.

If you share the concerns of most “practicing” doctors and want to reverse course on this disastrous legislation, here is what you need to do:

Contact your Representative in the U.S. House of Representatives:

Courteously ask them to support **H. R. 4903** (To repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.) There are 55 co-sponsors as of this letter.

Contact your two Senators in the U.S. Senate:

Kindly and respectfully ask them to support **S. 3152** (To repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) There are 20 co-sponsors as of this letter.

[NOTE: Even if there is no hope of passage in this 111th Congress, pressure must be applied to all of our leaders to ensure defunding in 2011 and the repeal and replacement of the law in 2013.]

Talk to your friends, family and neighbors and explain how this law will affect their lives and relationships with their doctors. Email this letter to all your contacts.

Visit your elected officials' district offices and tell them to ***Defund, Repeal and Replace*** this law. This is a very effective means of communication, especially for SENIOR CITIZENS.

I'm partnering with **Docs4PatientCare.org**, a member organization for all "doctors" and health care providers. D4PC has emerged as a national leader in educating the public and elected officials on the failures of this ill-conceived legislation. Furthermore, they intend to supplant the American Medical Association (AMA) as the new trusted source of information and advocacy for patients and physicians. They are leading the effort amongst America's practicing doctors in the Defund-Repeal-Replace effort. Urge your other physicians and allied health providers to join this organization. Go to **www.docs4patientcare.org** and print “Letter to My Doctor” and hand-deliver them to all of your healthcare providers.

You can join the fight by joining the **Docs4PatientCare Alliance at D4PCAlliance.org**. Docs 4 Patient Care is a grassroots organization with limited resources. Please provide

them with the financial means to continue this important work. Information is available at the website: **www.doc4patientcare.org**.

Respectfully,

PS: Visit **www.doc4patientcare.org** to read "Our Prescription for Responsible Health Insurance Reform". There exist many practical and common sense solutions for ensuring all Americans have coverage while preserving the most successful health care system in human history.

Every health care economist agrees, (even those who promote socialized medicine) that the primary problem with our current health care system is the fact that the tax deduction for health insurance is linked to one's employment.

This universally known problem could have been easily resolved and would have created the mechanism to get millions more Americans insured. This intentionally omitted provision would have given the patient, not the government, more control over their health care and the private system would have flourished.