

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT "ROMNEYCARE"?



By Stephen L. Bakke  April 7, 2014

#### *Here's what provoked me:*

*We often hear politicians and other pundits proclaiming ObamaCare as merely the descendent of RomneyCare, so a guest opinion which appeared late in March once more blaming ObamaCare on the republicans set me off. It made me want to respond and point out that close comparisons of the two laws, one Federal and one from the state of Massachusetts, show the circumstances and the plans themselves are quite different.*

#### *Here's my response:*

##### **What's important to know about "RomneyCare"?**

In a guest opinion on 3-29-14, Craig Tonjes castigated ObamaCare opponents because it "was based significantly on Republican blueprints." Democrats don't want to own ObamaCare, so they tell Republicans "you own it because of RomneyCare!" As minds are made up on the RomneyCare accusation, **first understand the context – then judge!**

- RomneyCare came from the state level, Massachusetts, with clear constitutional authority to do so. Romney wanted to do some sort of reform and decided to try it at the state level. The Feds arguably don't have the authority to do so.
- Massachusetts citizens, and the legislators, were overwhelmingly democrat.
- Bipartisan support existed for reform, and Romney agreed something should be attempted.
- Romney had to deal with much more radical liberal plans prior to that.
- Romney made aggressive use of the veto – e.g. employer mandate – was overridden every time.
- Romney wanted a bare bones/no frills policy – again he was overridden.
- RomneyCare is much more business friendly than ObamaCare.
- Goal of ObamaCare: government control of health care.
- Goal of RomneyCare: to cover the uninsured.

Romney was a governor who wanted health care reform, and got as much as he could get, and then signed the legislation – a pragmatic approach at the time, even if hindsight brings some regrets.