

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC":**
OBAMACARE:
Oh! WHAT MIGHT
HAVE BEEN!



By Stephen L. Bakke  September 27, 2015

Here's what provoked me:

Reports of good news about ObamaCare are really proof of failure. But they keep coming and I don't understand the shallowness of any analyses being performed. But finally a writer (other than me) recognizes the obvious contradictions between claims of success and the real intended results.

Here's my response:

ObamaCare: Oh! What Might Have Been!

On 9/26, Tracy Witham reacted to a 9/23 headline declaring "Health care deductibles up 40 percent since 2010". In "Ironies galore..." Witham points out the inconsistencies between ObamaCare's goals and results.

On 9/17, a report intended to convey good news, "Uninsured rate shows a healthy plunge," turns sour when it's analyzed. The results show Minnesota's reduction in uninsured population dropped by under 30%. Nationally, the drop has been under 25% since full implementation. ObamaCare was intended to deal with about 46 million uninsured persons. Currently we have reduced this by something over 15 million – and it may only be possible to expect an increase to 20 million. Failure!

That makes me reflect on "what might have been." We will spend several trillion dollars when we could have done better, and with far less effort and expense. Consider this alternative:

- Guaranteed insurability – accomplished with simple legislation without touching the system's structure. A straightforward high risk pool would accompany this.
- Insurance companies underwrite only major medical/catastrophic coverage.
- First dollar coverage accomplished through health savings accounts (HSAs).
- Desired relationship between personal income and healthcare costs achieved through the tax system. Tax treatment for major medical and HSAs would be on a sliding scale based on income - from partially deductible for the most wealthy; to fully deductible for those in the middle; to various levels of refundable tax credits for the lowest income levels.
- Traditional underwriting methods.
- Individual/family ownership of insurance policies.

Oh! What might have been!