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HEALTHCARE: THE SINGLE- PAYER CONTROVERSY



By Stephen L. Bakke  July 6, 2017

Here's what provoked me:

Hey SB! The "single-payer" healthcare payment system is a concept that just won't die. Maybe it's an idea that should be considered (NOT). At least you should look into what the advantages of that method might be, if indeed it could work. You have to understand the arguments FOR something, before you can effectively argue against it. Give it a shot! If you need help, give me a call. – Stefano Bachovich – obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit – a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything.

Here's my response:

Healthcare: The Single-Payer Question

A "single-payer" system is popular among democrats as a means to deliver healthcare and control costs. Consider the following:

- In this system there would be many "sellers" and only one "buyer" – the government.
- As the exclusive buyer, the government would set prices for all healthcare services, and unfortunately also control distribution and access.
- Consider little Charlie Gard who lies terminally ill in London. The British government won't let Charlie's parents bring him to the U.S. for experimental treatment, or even bring him home to die. They have raised funds to pay expenses. That's a single-payer system, and the government has that authority.
- Government domination stifles innovation, discourages competition, and distances customers from decision-making.
- Our insurance market has never been a "free marketplace." The consumer has always been "kept out of the loop."
- This can be reversed by having individual ownership of major medical insurance coverage. Combine this with comprehensive use of "Health Savings Accounts" for all standard and routine healthcare services.
- Transition rules and favorable tax treatment are subjects for further discussions.

Efficient and intelligent cost savings result from a free and transparent marketplace. That can't happen unless the consumer is close to the decision making and payment process.