



Case No. 2020-00746-FOIA-OS

November 16, 2020

Sent via email:

Mr. Austin R Evers
Executive Director
American Oversight
1030 15th Street, N.W., Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005
foia@americanoversight.org

Dear Mr. Evers:

This letter is the final response to your March 20, 2020, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. Specifically, you requested the following records: “American Oversight requests that your agency produce the following records within twenty business days:

All email communications (including emails, email attachments, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) between (a) any of the HHS officials listed in Column A, and (b) employees or representatives of any of the external entities listed in Column B, regarding legislative proposals to stop or limit surprise billing(see attachment)

For this request, American Oversight believes that records containing the terms below are likely to be responsive records, and American Oversight requests that HHS, at a minimum, employ these search terms to identify responsive records.

? “Surprise bill*”
? “Surprise medical bill*”
? “In-network”

? “In network”
? “Out-of-network”
? “Out of network”
? “Non-network”
? “Non network”
? “Federal benchmark”
? “Price-fixing”
? “Binding arbitration”
? “Rate setting”
? “Rate-setting”
§ “S. 1895”
§ “S 1895”
§ “H.R. 2328”
§ “HR 2328”

Please note that American Oversight is using the asterisk (*) to designate the standard use of “wildcards” in the search for responsive records. For example, a search for “Bill*” would return all of the following: Bill, Bills, Billing, etc.

Please provide all responsive records from January 1, 2019, through the date of the search.
(Date Range for Record Search: From 1/1/2019 To 3/20/2020).”

The Assistant Secretary for Administration (ASA) conducted a search and located **219 pages** of responsive records. After a careful review of these pages, I have determined to release **208 pages** to you in their entirety, and I am further releasing **11 pages** in part, with portions redacted, pursuant to Exemption (b)(6) of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. §552 (b)(6)).

FOIA exemption (b)(6) permits a Federal agency to withhold information and records about individuals in “personnel and medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.” The definition of “similar files” has historically been broadly interpreted to include a wide variety of files, and the United States Supreme Court has held that Congress intended the term “similar files” to be interpreted broadly, rather than narrowly. I have analyzed these records and find they meet the threshold requirement of this exemption. Additionally, I have reviewed and weighed the public interest in disclosure of this information against the privacy interest in nondisclosure, and found that the privacy interest outweighs the public’s interest in disclosure.

If you believe the information withheld should not be exempt from disclosure, or this response constitutes an adverse determination, you may appeal. By filing an appeal, you preserve your rights under FOIA and give the agency a chance to review and reconsider your request and the agency’s decision.

Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within 90 calendar days of the date of this letter, to

Ms. Kim Hutchinson
Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Room 729H
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Please clearly mark both the envelope and your letter “Freedom of Information Act Appeal.”
You may also e-mail your appeal to: HHS.ACFO@hhs.gov.

If you would like to discuss our response before filing an appeal to attempt to resolve your dispute without going through the appeals process, you may contact the HHS FOIA Public Liaison for assistance at:

HHS FOIA/PA Public Liaison
FOI/Privacy Acts Division
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
Office of the Secretary (OS)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Suite 729H
Washington, DC 20201

Telephone: (202) 690-7453
Fax: (202) 690-8320
E-mail: HHS_FOIA_Public_Liaison@hhs.gov



If you are unable to resolve your FOIA dispute through our FOIA Public Liaison, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the Federal FOIA Ombudsman’s office, offers

mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. The contact information for OGIS is:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Telephone: 202-741-5770
Toll-Free: 1-877-684-6448
E-mail: ogis@nara.gov
Fax: 202-741-5769

There are no charges in this instance because the billable costs are less than our threshold of \$25.

Sincerely yours,

Wakema Williams for

Brandon J. Gaylord
Director
FOI/Privacy Acts Division

Enclosure(s)

From:	Americans for Limited Government <media@limitgov.org>
To:	Azar, Alex (OS/IOS) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd4875f6a7414810934ed443c7f34740-Azar, Alex>
Subject:	Pelosi's drug-pricing plan fatally flawed
Date:	2019/12/11 09:29:17
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

Dec. 11, 2019

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Pelosi's drug-pricing plan fatally flawed

The House is expected to vote on Speaker Nancy Pelosi's drug pricing bill next week. The bill, titled the "Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019" was decried by a White House report this week, which found that the bill would suppress over 100 lifesaving drugs from entering the United States market. This would cause serious harm to American patients with The Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) estimating that this bill, "would reduce Americans' average life expectancy by about four months—nearly one-quarter of the projected gains in life expectancy over the next decade." This legislation will certainly cause companies to pull back on research and development of new and improved drugs—to the detriment of those in need of new therapies and cures, and to America's position as the world leader in medical innovation. Be very wary of these hair-brained Pelosi price-control schemes, especially if you or a loved one is battling a life-threatening cancer diagnosis and the promise of up-and-coming drugs are the only recourse. For the sake of those we care about most, it's imperative lawmakers stop these European-style price-control

proposals in their tracks, and send a message to Pelosi that Americans deserve better than a botched bill that restricts access to lifesaving innovative drugs.

Video: FBI debunked Russia allegations against Trump in Jan. 2017 but hid it from court, kept spying going

By Jan. 2017, the key source the FBI, Justice Department, intelligence agencies and former British spy Christopher Steele relied on for getting electronic surveillance of the Trump campaign had contradicted all of the key claims about President Donald Trump being a Russian agent that were used in the FISA warrant, but the FBI hid that information from senior leaders in the Justice Department and the FISA court to keep the spying going, even after President Trump was sworn into office.

Compromise on government rate-setting legislation for surprise medical billing misses the mark

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "A compromise bill from U.S. Representatives Greg Walden and Frank Pallone, and Sen. Lamar Alexander on surprise medical bills, if it still relies on government-rate setting will be a disaster for patients. It favors insurance companies, who will have a perverse incentive to remove rural community hospitals from their networks in order to compel artificially low reimbursement rates, leading to more hospital closures and limiting access. Bills offered by U.S. Rep. Phil Roe and Senators Bill Cassidy and Michael Bennet instead establish an independent board to settle billing disputes between doctors and insurance companies. While insurance companies may have the power in D.C., they are health care payment vehicles, not health care itself, and billing disputes should be independently decided to ensure continued quality health care access for all Americans."

Video: Barr says IG report confirms spying on Trump campaign, grave abuses of FISA

Attorney General William Barr to NBC News: "I think our nation was turned on its head for three years based on a completely bogus narrative that was largely fanned and hyped by a completely irresponsible press. I think there were gross abuses ...and inexplicable behavior that is intolerable in the FBI...I think that leaves open the possibility that there was bad faith."

Pelosi's drug-pricing plan fatally flawed



[6](#)

By Rick Manning

You'd think Democrats and Republicans in Washington could find a way to work together to help people get the cutting-edge, lifesaving medications they need. Sadly, that's not the case.

The House is expected to [vote](#) on Speaker Nancy Pelosi's drug pricing bill next week. The bill, titled the "Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019" was [decried](#) by a White House report this week, which found that the bill would suppress over 100 lifesaving

drugs from entering the United States market. This would cause serious harm to American patients with The Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) estimating that this bill, “would reduce Americans’ average life expectancy by about four months—nearly one-quarter of the projected gains in life expectancy over the next decade.”

Furthermore, the CEA estimates the loss of these new drugs coupled with the worse health outcomes for American patients would create an economic loss of \$1 trillion per year over the next decade – a loss that far outweighs any projected saving from the bill.

According to the analysis, “Heavy-handed government intervention may reduce drug prices in the short term, but these savings are not worth the long-term cost of American patients losing access to new lifesaving treatments.”

They’re absolutely right. Speaker Pelosi’s drug-pricing plan would require manufacturers of the 250 most expensive drugs on the market to “negotiate” a price cap with Congress, or otherwise face a 65 percent tax on gross sales for the year.

At those absurd margins, drug companies would be paying the government to research, develop and manufacture life-saving treatments—something that is simply unsustainable and would discourage the production of new and better drugs for patients in need.

As the Wall Street Journal editorial board [writes](#), “How many companies do you know with 65% margins? The concept of negotiated prices with government has always been a political ruse because the government has outsize leverage to coerce manufacturers, so at least Mrs. Pelosi is transparent about the thuggery.”

It’s not a cheap undertaking to invest in pharmaceuticals that take years to get to market – if they make it at all—and those who do run prescription-drug businesses operate on relatively thin returns.

What’s more, Pelosi’s drug plan would cap the price of 250 brand-name Medicare drugs using a formula based on the average cost of those same drugs in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom. Yet, patients in these

countries have longer waiting times for lifesaving medicines and they lag far behind in medical innovation. Why would we want to adopt their model? It may sound good to adopt the price control model of these nations, but it will seriously harm our citizens.

“We found that, contrary to public assertions, the median time approval for new cancer medicines in the United States was just six months—and that these new anticancer medicines are typically available in the United States before they are in Europe,” says Health Affairs.

This legislation will certainly cause companies to pull back on research and development of new and improved drugs—to the detriment of those in need of new therapies and cures, and to America’s position as the world leader in medical innovation.

The bottom line? Be very wary of these hair-brained Pelosi price-control schemes, especially if you or a loved one is battling a life-threatening cancer diagnosis and the promise of up-and-coming drugs are the only recourse.

For the sake of those we care about most, it’s imperative lawmakers stop these European-style price-control proposals in their tracks, and send a message to Pelosi that Americans deserve better than a botched bill that restricts access to lifesaving innovative drugs.

The author is president of Americans for Limited Government and co-author with Star Parker of the new book “Necessary Noise: How Donald Trump Inflames the Culture War and Why that is Good for America”.

Video: FBI debunked Russia allegations against Trump in Jan. 2017 but hid it from court, kept spying going



To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DmEGuO6Wtl>



algpressreleases.PNG

Compromise on government rate-setting legislation for surprise medical billing misses the mark

Dec. 9, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement rejecting [a deal](#) between House and Senate negotiators on a bill to address surprise medical billing with government rate setting:

“A compromise bill from U.S. Representatives Greg Walden and Frank Pallone, and Sen. Lamar Alexander on surprise medical bills, if it still relies on government-rate setting will be a disaster for patients. It favors insurance companies, who will have a perverse incentive to remove rural community hospitals from their networks in order to compel artificially low reimbursement rates, leading to more hospital closures and limiting access. Bills offered by U.S. Rep. Phil Roe and Senators Bill Cassidy and Michael Bennet instead establish an independent board to settle billing disputes between doctors and insurance companies. While insurance companies may have the power in D.C., they are health care payment vehicles, not health care itself, and billing disputes should be independently decided to ensure continued quality health care access for all Americans.”

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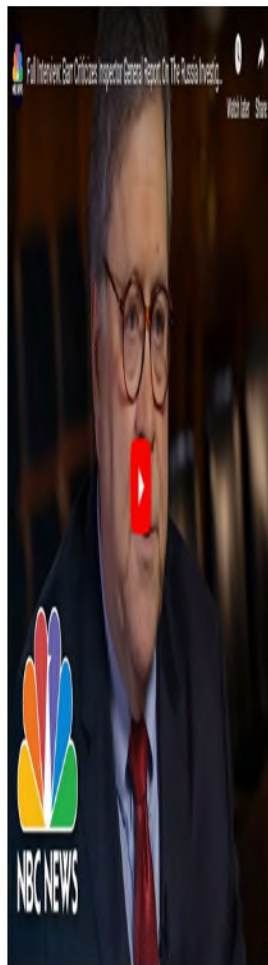


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THE BEST COMMENTARIES AND BLOGS DAILY

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ALG Editor's Note: [In the following featured report from NBC News](#), upon receiving DOJ Inspector General Michael Horowitz' report on abuses of the FISA system by the Justice Department and FBI, Attorney General William Barr contends that the FBI may have acted in "bad faith" in spying on the Trump campaign, the opposition party, in an election year:

Video: Barr thinks FBI may have acted in 'bad faith' in probing Trump campaign's links to Russia



To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRKFo0JmuBc>

By Ken Dilanian

WASHINGTON — Attorney General William Barr said he still believes the FBI may have operated out of "bad faith" when it investigated whether the Trump campaign colluded with Russia, and he contends the FBI acted improperly by continuing the investigation after Donald Trump took office.

In an exclusive interview with NBC News, Barr essentially dismissed [the findings of the Justice Department's inspector general](#) that there was no evidence of political bias in the launching of the Russia probe, saying that his hand-picked prosecutor, John Durham, will have the last word on the matter.

"I think our nation was turned on its head for three years based on a completely bogus narrative that was largely fanned and hyped by a completely irresponsible press," Barr said. "I think there were gross abuses ...and inexplicable behavior that is intolerable in the FBI."

"I think that leaves open the possibility that there was bad faith."

Barr's blistering criticism of the FBI's conduct in the Russia investigation, which went well beyond the errors outlined in the inspector general report, is bound to stoke further debate about whether the attorney general is acting in good faith, or as a political hatchet man for Trump.

Inspector General Michael Horowitz, after reviewing a million documents and interviewing 100 people, concluded that he "did not find documentary or testimonial evidence that political bias or improper motivation influenced the decisions to open" the investigations into Trump campaign aides.

[Click here to read the report.](#)

But Barr argued that Horowitz didn't look very hard, and that the inspector general accepted the FBI's explanations at face value.

"All he said was, people gave me an explanation and I didn't find anything to contradict it ... he hasn't decided the issue of improper motive," Barr said. "I think we have to wait until the full investigation is done."

Barr said he stood by his assertion that the Trump campaign was spied on, noting that the FBI used confidential informants who recorded conversations with Trump campaign officials.

"It was clearly spied upon," he said. "That's what electronic surveillance is ... going through people's emails, wiring people up."

Barr portrayed the Russia investigation as a bogus endeavor that was foisted on Trump, rather than something undertaken by career civil servants who were concerned about whether a foreign power had compromised a political campaign.

"From a civil liberties standpoint, the greatest danger to our free system is that the incumbent government use the apparatus of the state ... both to spy on political opponents but also to use them in a way that could affect the outcome of an election," Barr said. He added that this was the first time in history that "counterintelligence techniques" were used against a presidential campaign.

Barr said that presidential campaigns are frequently in contact with foreigners, contradicting the comments of numerous political professionals who have said for two years that there is rarely, if ever, a reason for a presidential campaign to be in touch with Russians.

Barr added, "There was and never has been any evidence of collusion and yet this campaign and the president's administration has been dominated by this investigation into what turns out to be completely baseless."

But the biggest outrage, Barr said, is that the FBI's "case collapsed after the election and they never told the court and they kept on getting these renewals."

The inspector general report does not say the FBI's Russia case collapsed after the election. It does say that the FBI interviewed some of the sources for the dossier

written by a British operative, who raised questions about his reporting. But by then, the investigation had moved well beyond anything in the dossier.

In fact, FBI officials told the IG they knew the dossier was raw intelligence that could be filled with inaccuracies. They relied in part on information from it to obtain a warrant to conduct surveillance on Trump campaign adviser Carter Page, who had previously been the target of recruitment by Russian intelligence. The inspector general criticized the FBI for 17 errors and omissions in the applications for surveillance.

But after the election, there was a different set of counterintelligence concerns that Horowitz did not address in his report and Barr did not mention in the interview: Trump fired FBI Director James Comey and told Russian officials in the Oval Office that doing so relieved pressure on him over Russia.

That led then-acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe to open a counterintelligence investigation into Trump, the results of which have never been disclosed.

In indictments and the report written by former special counsel Robert Mueller, prosecutors identified, by one count, 272 contacts between the Trump team and Russia-linked operatives, some of which have never been explained.

Mueller also determined that during the election, Trump was trying to negotiate a business deal in Moscow that would have required the approval of the Russian government.

Mueller said he did not establish coordination between the Trump campaign and the Russian government, but he also said the Trump team strategized about how to benefit from the fruits of Russia's election interference, particularly the disclosures of hacked Democratic emails.

The trial of Trump operative Roger Stone showed the extent to which the Trump campaign was trying to get information from Wikileaks, which had been identified as working closely with Russian intelligence.

Barr mentioned none of that. He said the basis for opening the Russia investigation was "flimsy" because it stemmed solely from a report of a statement by a young

aide, George Papadopoulos, who said he was offered Democratic emails by a Russian agent and didn't report the conversation to the FBI.

"They jumped right into a full-scale investigation before they even went to talk to the foreign officials about exactly what was said.... They opened an investigation into the campaign and they used very intrusive techniques," Barr said.

The inspector general report said the decision to open the investigation was unanimous among those in the loop within the FBI and the Justice Department, a group of mostly career officials.

Durham will now investigate their actions, Barr said.

On Monday, Durham added his voice to Barr's criticism of the IG report, saying, "Last month, we advised the inspector general that we do not agree with some of the report's conclusions as to predication and how the F.B.I. case was opened."

Barr said Durham's much-criticized statement was appropriate.

"It was necessary to avoid public confusion," he said. "It was sort of being reported by the press that the issue of predication was sort of done and over. I think it was important for people to understand that Durham's work was not being preempted and that Durham was doing something different."

[Permalink here.](#)

This email is intended for Alex.Azar@hhs.gov.
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Sender:	Americans for Limited Government <media@limitgov.org>
Recipient:	Azar, Alex (OS/IOS) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd4875f6a7414810934ed443c7f34740-Azar, Alex>
Sent Date:	2019/12/11 09:28:07
Delivered Date:	2019/12/11 09:29:17

From:	Jason Pye <jpye@freedomworks.org>
To:	(b)(6)@who.eop.gov; Azar, Alex (OS/IOS) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd4875f6a7414810934ed443c7f34740-Azar, Alex>; Verma, Seema (CMS/OA) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=e36583cd19bb453997718e4ca9ac8a93-SeemaVermaP>
Subject:	Letter Regarding "Surprise Billing" and Government Rate-Setting
Date:	2019/04/22 17:00:11
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note

Director Mulvaney, Secretary Azar, and Administrator Verma,

Attached you'll find a letter from FreedomWorks President Adam Brandon and a coalition letter from 17 conservative groups on "surprise billing" and government rate-setting of health insurance.

If you or your staff have any questions, please email me at jpye@freedomworks.org or call me at (b)(6)

Jason Pye
Vice President of Legislative Affairs
FreedomWorks

jpye@freedomworks.org
(202) 942-7634 (office)
(b)(6) cell)
Twitter: [@pye](https://twitter.com/pye)

111 K St NE Suite 600
Washington, DC 20002

The mission of FreedomWorks is to build, educate, and mobilize the largest network of activists advocating the principles of smaller government, lower taxes, free markets, personal liberty, and the rule of law.

Sender:	Jason Pye <jpye@freedomworks.org>
Recipient:	(b)(6)@who.eop.gov; Azar, Alex (OS/IOS) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd4875f6a7414810934ed443c7f34740-Azar, Alex>; Verma, Seema (CMS/OA) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=e36583cd19bb453997718e4ca9ac8a93-SeemaVermaP>
Sent Date:	2019/04/22 16:59:16
Delivered Date:	2019/04/22 17:00:11



April 22, 2019

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director, White House Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

As White House and administration officials work together to put an end to the practice of surprise billing, I encourage them to stay vigilant of proposals that suggest government rate-setting as a viable solution.

On March 2, FreedomWorks sent a coalition letter to members of Congress signed by representatives from 17 organizations against government rate-setting in healthcare. Government rate-setting in healthcare will only lead to premium increases, higher out-of-pocket costs, and decreased consumer choice.

As the following letter states:

“We cannot continue to subject Americans to this same problem. Government forcing this approach in the private market will further distort free-market economics and do little to protect Americans from rising healthcare costs or the limited coverage networks driving the increase in surprise medical bills. We need market-based solutions that foster competition and empower individuals to keep healthcare where it belongs – between patients and their doctors.”

Proposals from by Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) offer solutions that align with expectations from proponents of a hands-on government all-payer approach to “fix” surprise billing. The most surprising of the proposals is the one from Sen. Cassidy (R-La.), which flies in the face of conservative ideals. Sen. Cassidy proposes government-set reimbursement rates for insured patients that receive out-of-network care.

A system like these lawmakers are proposing would eliminate patient choice and insert government interference where it doesn't belong. Price controls would deter innovation, access to care, and remove incentives for quality improvements.

As an influential leader in healthcare policy, I urge you to avoid proposals that would create a healthcare system that relies on government-set rates. The consensus appears to be that a federal solution is the path forward on this issue. However, pushing America toward an all-payer healthcare system is not the answer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Brandon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Adam Brandon
President, FreedomWorks

CC: The Honorable Alex M. Azar II, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services; The Honorable Seema Verma, Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

March 25, 2019

Dear Member of Congress,

We write to express our concerns about various bills proposing the expansion of government in the healthcare system through government-set rates. Giving government the power to forcefully set reimbursement rates for healthcare services administered to the privately insured is a step in the wrong direction for our country and will do more harm than good.

More and more, 2020 presidential hopefuls and members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are proposing even more government interference in the private healthcare market as the solution to curb the cost of care. Whether it's Sen. Bernie Sanders' (I-Vt.) Medicare for All approach, Sen. Kamala Harris' (D-Calif.) push for the full elimination of private health insurance, or Sen. Bill Cassidy's (R-La.) proposed legislation to solve the surprise billing problem with government-set rates, at the heart of each proposal is government price controls for the private market. Anyone who is interested in ensuring that Americans have access to affordable, quality healthcare should oppose these proposals.

Placing government in the middle of payment negotiations between the healthcare providers and the insurance companies did not work to curb healthcare costs on the Obamacare exchange and Americans are suffering the consequences – increased premiums and deductibles, surprise medical bills from narrow insurance networks, decreased patient choice, and limited access to care.

We cannot continue to subject Americans to this same problem. Government forcing this approach in the private market will further distort free-market economics and do little to protect Americans from rising healthcare costs or the limited coverage networks driving the increase in surprise medical bills. We need market-based solutions that foster competition and empower individuals to keep healthcare where it belongs – between patients and their doctors.

The key to healthcare freedom and a reformed system is encouraging competition and increasing consumer choice. Americans need improved access to affordable care, a growing supply of healthcare providers and innovation that can achieve long-term quality improvements and cost reductions. Setting government price controls for reimbursement rates in the private market does nothing to achieve these goals.

As a lawmaker, we urge you to avoid proposed solutions that force you to choose between protecting patients with government-set rates and a healthcare system inclusive of limited government interference in privatized care, consumers empowered to make their own healthcare decisions, as well as competition-driven cost containment. We urge you to oppose any bills that would set America on the path towards a single-payer system with government rate-setting.

Sincerely,

Adam Brandon, President
FreedomWorks

Tom Schatz, President
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Saulius “Saul” Anuzis, President
60 Plus Association

Bob Barr, Chairman
Liberty Guard

Andrew Langer, President
Institute for Liberty

Jeff Mazzella, President
Center for Individual Freedom

Mark Gibbons, President/CEO
RetireSafe

Matthew Kandrach, President
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

Twlia Brase RN, PHN, President and Co-Founder
Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom

David Williams, President
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

James L. Martin, Founder/Chairman
60 Plus Association

Seton Motley, President
Less Government

Steve Pociask, President/CEO
American Consumer Institute

Jerry Rogers, President
Capitol Allies

Ike Brannon, President
Capital Policy Analytics

George Landrith, President
Frontiers of Freedom

Mario H. Lopez
Hispanic Leadership Fund

From:	Americans for Limited Government <media@limitgov.org>
To:	Azar, Alex (OS/IOS) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd4875f6a7414810934ed443c7f34740-Azar, Alex>
Subject:	Bureaucrat-set health care rates? What could go wrong?
Date:	2019/10/03 16:20:28
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

Oct. 3, 2019

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

Bureaucrat-set health care rates? What could go wrong?

Oct. 3, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement blasting House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal’s (D-Mass.) [health care rate setting proposal](#):

“What rational person outside of the D.C. Beltway would think it is a good idea to outsource health care rate setting to government bureaucrats and insurance lobbyists? I guess if you have the money for a team of Gucci-shoed lobbyists to push their case to bureaucrats this might be a good idea. If you are a bureaucrat looking for the lucrative landing spot after 30 years of civil service, this is a great idea. But for everyone else, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal’s ‘negotiated rulemaking’ is just another step toward government-run healthcare, restricted access to medical care, a bailout for the health insurances

companies that brought us Obamacare, and it will lead to doctor shortages and close healthcare facilities in rural communities.

"Let's be clear, the best health care reform is to open markets for competition which creates lower costs naturally. Government dictated rate-setting is guaranteed to end up with those who can afford to plead their cases benefitting, those who decide the cases benefitting, and the people who have no voice being forgotten. The last thing our nation needs is more healthcare bureaucrats, yet that is exactly what this proposal creates. It would be laughable if it wasn't so dangerous."

To view online: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=ca7b633d-962f7a41-ca7b5202-0cc47adc5fa2-0de0112f8195423a&u=https://getliberty.org/2019/10/bureaucrat-set-health-care-rates-what-could-go-wrong/>

Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org.

###

Americans for Limited Government is dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by restoring constitutionally limited government, allowing individuals to pursue life, liberty and happiness. For more information on ALG please visit our website at <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=98a9b997-c4fda0eb-98a988a8-0cc47adc5fa2-8354fa7a4cf4bea1&u=http://www.getliberty.org/> and <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=0889c9fa-54ddd086-0889f8c5-0cc47adc5fa2-a5b50a07139dd332&u=http://www.dailytorch.com/>.

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To:	Azar, Alex (OS/IOS) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd4875f6a7414810934ed443c7f34740-Azar, Alex>
Subject:	Kickstarter calls MS-13 'marginalized group,' deplatforms conservative comic creator whose hero is depicted beating up gang members who mugged a woman
Date:	2019/10/04 10:05:05
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

Oct. 4, 2019

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Kickstarter calls MS-13 'marginalized group,' deplatforms conservative comic creator whose hero is depicted beating up gang members who mugged a woman

A conservative comic book creator was deplatformed from the crowdfunding website Kickstarter because the vigilante hero from his book is depicted beating up MS-13-esque gang members while saving a black woman from being mugged, with Kickstarter calling the gang a "marginalized group." The letter read, "As a Public Benefit Corporation committed to fighting inequality and creating a more equitable world, Kickstarter does not allow discrimination, subjugation, or intolerance towards marginalized groups." Miller fired back at Kickstarter on Twitter, writing, "Hey team @kickstarter, it's nice to see that you consider MS-13 a 'marginalized group', since that's the only people who were being 'subjugated' in the artwork I provided... More wokeness from the tech companies on display." It is mean-spirited political bias by Kickstarter, no question, but its decision is still quite unbelievable to protect what the

Justice Department has called “the world’s most notorious gang” that targets juveniles and dismembers victims.

Cartoon: Capital Punishment

Crime? Who needs a crime?

Video: Democrats can't impeach President Trump for having AG Barr enforce the law and prevent intel abuse

President Donald Trump and Attorney General William Barr are constitutionally obligated to enforce the law, prevent intel abuse and root out corruption, even by members of the opposition party.

What could go wrong with House Democrats' surprise medical billing rate setting proposal? Everything.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: “What rational person outside of the D.C. Beltway would think it is a good idea to outsource health care rate setting to government bureaucrats and insurance lobbyists? I guess if you have the money for a team of Gucci-shoed lobbyists to push their case to bureaucrats this might be a good idea. If you are a bureaucrat looking for the lucrative landing spot after 30 years of civil service, this is a great idea. But for everyone else, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal’s ‘negotiated rulemaking’ is just another step toward government-run healthcare, restricted access to medical care, a bailout for the health insurances companies that brought us Obamacare, and it will lead to doctor shortages and close healthcare facilities in rural communities.”

Everyone deserves due process, even President Trump

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: “House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy is right to put Speaker Nancy Pelosi on the spot by demanding due process in any impeachment proceedings. By insisting that President Trump be afforded the same rights as previous recent presidents who faced impeachment inquiries, including the rights to cross-examine witnesses, McCarthy is taking the first step toward ending a narrative-driven impeachment effort based on hearsay and innuendo by forcing House Democrats to follow established procedures or admitting that the entirety of this anti-Trump effort is illegitimate and devoid of basic legal protections. The next words out of Pelosi’s mouth should be

to McCarthy, 'Yes, to all of the above,' or, if not, then in the words of Gilda Radner's SNL character, 'Never mind.'"

Daily Caller: Former NSC Chief of Staff: Schiff 'broke' rules, 'should recuse himself from this impeachment inquiry'

Former National Security Council Chief of Staff Fred Fleitz: "The NYT confirmed what I said last week: Schiff knew about the CIA whistleblower in advance ... At a minimum, Schiff should recuse himself from this impeachment inquiry."

Kickstarter calls MS-13 'marginalized group,' deplatforms conservative comic creator whose hero is depicted beating up gang members who mugged a woman



6

By Robert Romano

A conservative comic book creator was [deplatformed](#) from the crowdfunding website Kickstarter apparently because the vigilante hero from his book is depicted beating up [MS-13](#)-esque gang members while saving a black woman from being mugged, with Kickstarter calling the gang a "marginalized group."

The book, called "Lonestar" — now available for its [second printing](#) on Indiegogo along with its sequel — is by [Mike S. Miller](#), a comic book veteran of almost three decades, who has been crowdfunding his books for over a year with a great deal of success, raising more than \$350,000 with more than 6,600 backers combined on the projects.

After building his audience on Indiegogo, Miller decided to give Kickstarter, which has a larger potential audience, a try. Initially, the project was [approved](#) on Sept.

27 until Miller says he started posting some of the artwork from the story, including the hero rescuing the woman from being mugged, and then suddenly he got a message from Kickstarter's Trust and Safety saying the project was [rejected](#) on Oct. 2.

[The letter read](#), "We've carefully reviewed it against our Rules, and we're unable to approve it to launch. As a Public Benefit Corporation committed to fighting inequality and creating a more equitable world, Kickstarter does not allow discrimination, subjugation, or intolerance towards marginalized groups."

Kickstarter told Miller to review the website's rules and restrictions, which he [says in a Youtube video](#) he followed, and warned Miller that "This decision is non-negotiable."



[6](#)

Miller fired back at Kickstarter on Twitter, [writing](#), "Hey team [@kickstarter](#), it's nice to see that you consider MS-13 a 'marginalized group', since that's the only people who were being 'subjugated' in the artwork I provided... More wokeness from the tech companies on display."

It is mean-spirited political bias by Kickstarter, no question.

But here, Kickstarter's decision in the name of protecting MS-13 is quite unbelievable. The Justice Department recently published a 90-page briefing on MS-13, a brutal Central American street gang, and its acts of violence, sexual assault, drug and human trafficking, ["MS-13 in the Americas: How the World's Most Notorious Gang Defies Logic, Resists Destruction."](#)

According to the Justice Department paper, the gang views itself as being in a "constant state of war": "Violence is a major part of the glue that binds the MS-13. It is part of every stage of an MS-13 member's life: potential members commit

violent acts to be considered for membership and ultimately to gain entry; they are beaten into the gang in a ritual that has left more than one permanently scarred; they move up the gang ladder by 'putting in the work' and showing 'commitment,' euphemisms for committing violent acts in the name of the gang. Its rivalry with the Barrio 18 means the MS-13 is in a constant state of war. It is also facing down challenges from security forces. It operates amid potential informants. In this environment, commitment is not just a means to move up the ladder, it is about survival. It is not surprising, then that the gang has integrated this into its lexicon: Members are, as they say, soldiers."

The briefing details the gruesomeness of the murders committed by MS-13: "In the MS-13, all members must do 'missions,' and during a mission, all members must participate. In some cases, this means repeatedly hacking a victim with a machete. Refusal means almost certain death since the member or aspiring member is a potential witness. The weapon of choice frequently is a knife, a machete or a baseball bat. The gang's murder victims have signs of repeated blows and stab wounds, and are sometimes partially or completely dismembered. The authorities that inspected a scene in Long Island where two teenage girls were killed in 2016 with baseball bats, for example, told InSight Crime the victims looked like they had been run over by a car."

Just in [May](#) and [February](#), more gang members were indicted by the Justice Department on kidnapping-murders, including [the brutal slayings of two Virginia juveniles](#) who were thought by the killers to be rival gang members in the February case.

This is what Kickstarter thinks is a "marginalized group"? By their logic, any standard crime drama that depicts gang violence on primetime or the [Emmy Award-winning](#) series, "Breaking Bad," which in part depicted Mexican drug cartels and their gang enforcers who murder children, would be ineligible for funding on Kickstarter because, in its apparent view, the gangs were not bloodthirsty murderers who dismember their victims, they were actually the victims being discriminated against. Meanwhile, back in reality, it is not unsurprising gangs would find their way into a comic book to be portrayed as villains.

Miller, for his part, is a devout Christian and political conservative, and a supporter of President Donald Trump, who he says inspired him to leave mainstream comics

where he drew art for DC, Marvel and Image over his career [in a July 24 interview with fellow comic creator Jason Brubaker](#). "A couple of years ago this blonde fellow [Trump] got elected President, and it gave me this surge of hope again that I could actually do something," Miller said.

Miller explained, "I've been writing, I never stopped creating, so I've been creating stuff for 30 years and... having been a publisher, I was like, there's no hope for starting another publishing company because it's insane, but I had all this content, all these ... intellectual properties, movie treatments, you know, drawings and all this stuff that I've just done over the years and I'm like, um, when I had that burst of hope I'm like I gotta do something with this. I sat down and I wrote out a white paper on Blacklist Comics." Blacklist is the name of Miller's publishing imprint.

Reached for contact on Twitter, [Miller wrote](#), "I had been intending on building my own company for a while, my business model simply changed when the crowd funding aspect became so viable via influencer marketing through YouTube... [But with Trump] I had hope for the future I hadn't felt in a decade. It was then I decided to get to work on my plan."

Then, Miller said he got a call from fellow comic book veteran, [Ethan Van Sciver](#), who encouraged him to put his projects on Indiegogo: "He was making all this money on Youtube, and he's like, dude, you know, get your Youtube channel up and started, up and going, and I'm like, okay, and I started doing my Youtube channel, and he's like the secret is you got to do stuff every day, and I'm like, well, it's not growing exponentially fast and I'm not as entertaining as some, but Ethan had launched his Indiegogo and he brings me on this big celebratory hangout where he had just, he was wrapping up his first month I think and he had made \$400,000."

Miller continued, "He and this guy, Richard [C. Meyer], who at the time was known as Diversity & Comics, they had a proven business model. So I continued to grow my Youtube channel, you know it wasn't huge when I first launched my first campaign... I had about 1,000 subs, which was a thousand more people I talk to everyday than before, and I ended up by the time I closed that campaign, I think I had 3,000 subs and I had made \$113,000 on my book and I was like, okay... this is making indie comics a reality."

Miller added, “I mean, the guys on Indiegogo... we are the highest paid artists in the comic book industry... [In mainstream comics,] the grind of having to get five pages done a week to pay your mortgage and you’re still broke. Comics do not pay. They are great training ground. You learn all the necessary skills for storytelling and layout and structure and all that stuff... but the pay is garbage.”

Brubaker asked Miller if he would ever return to mainstream comics and he said, “No, not a chance... they couldn’t afford me now.”

That is a real story of the American dream, of creators who have [bravely set out on their own](#) and created small businesses, where venues like Indiegogo or Kickstarter are indispensable to raising funds.

Similar discrimination by Kickstarter occurred against Miller’s colleagues, [Richard C. Meyer](#) and [Jon Malin](#) for their graphic novel, “[Jawbreakers](#),” in 2018, depicting a military group of ex-superheroes turned mercenaries, which prompted them to go to Indiegogo instead, where it has grossed a combined \$627,000 for its first two offerings ([Aaron Alfeche](#) came on to draw the sequel while Malin went to work on other projects).

The connection is Meyer, Miller, Van Sciver, whose “[Cyberfrog](#)” has netted more than \$932,000 in four offerings, and Malin, whose “[Graveyard Shift](#)” has raised more than \$280,000 in two offerings — who all come from differing backgrounds and do not necessarily see eye to eye on all issues political and cultural — are all outspoken critics of the comic book industry they say has become too biased and saturated with a diversity-driven political agenda being run by social justice warriors. Apparently, so has Kickstarter.

If big tech platforms want to, they can exert political and cultural bias, and suppress small businesses’ exposure when they speak out against it. If it were done on account of race, sex or religion, these would be clear cut civil rights violations, but members of Congress have not yet extended [public accommodations civil rights laws](#) to cover political, philosophical or cultural views. But, with repeated deplatforming of conservatives and other independent thinkers on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Youtube](#) and other venues, threatening [a social tyranny](#) in the U.S. of thought police, maybe they should.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government and in another life would have gone to comic book school.

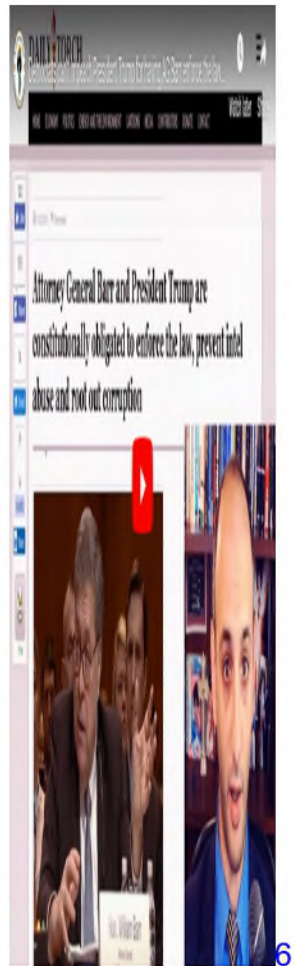
Cartoon: Capital Punishment

By A.F. Branco



[Click here for a higher level resolution version.](#)

Video: Democrats can't impeach President Trump for having AG Barr enforce the law and prevent intel abuse



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algpessreleases.PNG

What could go wrong with House Democrats' surprise medical billing rate setting proposal? Everything.

Oct. 3, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement blasting House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal's (D-Mass.) [surprise medical billing rate setting proposal](#):

"What rational person outside of the D.C. Beltway would think it is a good idea to outsource health care rate setting to government bureaucrats and insurance lobbyists? I guess if you have the money for a team of Gucci-shoed lobbyists to push their case to bureaucrats this might be a good idea. If you are a bureaucrat looking for the lucrative landing spot after 30 years of civil service, this is a great idea. But for everyone else, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal's 'negotiated rulemaking' is just another step toward government-run healthcare, restricted access to medical care, a bailout for the health insurance companies that brought us Obamacare, and it will lead to doctor shortages and close healthcare facilities in rural communities.

"Let's be clear, the best health care reform is to open markets for competition which creates lower costs naturally. Government dictated rate-setting is guaranteed to end up with those who can afford to plead their cases benefitting, those who decide the cases benefitting, and the people who have no voice being forgotten. The last thing our nation needs is more healthcare bureaucrats, yet that is exactly what this proposal creates. It would be laughable if it wasn't so dangerous."

To view online: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=55206250-09744b7b-5520536f-0cc47a6d17cc-9a6362c386f4a9e9&u=https://getliberty.org/2019/10/bureaucrat-set-health-care-rates-what-could-go-wrong/>

Everyone deserves due process, even President Trump

Oct. 3, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement praising House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) for his [letter](#) to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) demanding due process for President Donald Trump in any impeachment inquiry:

"House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy is right to put Speaker Nancy Pelosi on the spot by demanding due process in any impeachment proceedings. By insisting that President Trump be afforded the same rights as previous recent presidents who faced impeachment inquiries, including the rights to cross-examine witnesses, McCarthy is taking the first step toward ending a narrative-driven impeachment effort based on hearsay and innuendo by forcing House Democrats to follow established procedures or admitting that the entirety of this anti-Trump effort is illegitimate and devoid of basic legal protections. The next words out of Pelosi's mouth should be to McCarthy, 'Yes, to all of the above,' or, if not, then in the words of Gilda Radner's SNL character, 'Never mind.'"

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toohotnottonote5.PNG

ALG Editor's Note: [In the following featured column from the Daily Caller's David Krayden](#), former National Security Council Chief of Staff Fred Fleitz calls upon House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) to recuse himself from any impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump:



DailyCaller5.png

Former NSC Chief of Staff: Schiff ‘broke’ rules, ‘should recuse himself from this impeachment inquiry’

By David Krayden

Former CIA officer and National Security Council Chief of Staff Fred Fleitz tweeted Tuesday that House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff “broke committee rules” and “should recuse himself” from any impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump.

“The NYT confirmed what I said last week: Schiff knew about the CIA whistleblower in advance ... At a minimum, Schiff should recuse himself from this impeachment inquiry,” Fleitz tweeted.

Fleitz was referring to a New York Times [story](#) reporting that California Democratic Rep. Schiff had prior knowledge of the whistleblower’s [declassified complaint](#).

The former NSC chief of staff said Schiff is guilty of breaking Intelligence Committee rules by not sharing the whistleblower complaint with Republican members of the body because “classified info brought to the committee from outside sources MUST BE SHARED WITH BOTH SIDES.”

Fleitz suggested last week in an op-ed for the [New York Post](#), that after analyzing the whistleblower’s complaint he found it too polished and that it had too much in common with the Democratic impeachment agenda — and an Aug. 28, 2019 [tweet](#) from Schiff.

“This document looks as if this leaker had outside help, possibly from congressional members or staff,” Fleitz [wrote](#).

Fleitz, currently the President and CEO of the Center for Security Policy, insisted it’s “more than a coincidence that this complaint surfaced and was directed to the House Intelligence Committee just after Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), an outspoken opponent of Trump, expressed numerous complaints in August 2019 accusing the President of abusing aid to Ukraine to hurt Joe Biden.”

[Permalink here.](#)

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Subject:	Senate rejects S.J. Res. 52, upholds 1332 waivers that restore federalism to health insurance markets
Date:	2019/10/30 16:56:17
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



[6](#)

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

Oct. 30, 2019

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

Senate rejects S.J. Res. 52, upholds 1332 waivers that restore federalism to health insurance markets

Oct. 30, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement praising the Senate for [rejecting S.J. Res. 52](#) and upholding 1332 waivers that restore state primacy in health insurance markets:

"The President kept his word by administratively undoing parts of Obamacare that decrease competition and drive up health care costs, beginning the process of restoring state primacy over the insurance markets. House Democrats tried to undo that using the Congressional Review Act, but thanks to the Senate that effort failed. And the Senate should also reject any other attempts to create artificial government price controls including the unintended consequences in health care policy in the surprise medical billing legislation currently being

considered in the House, which would have the perverse effect of driving up overall health care costs as well."

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Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org to arrange an interview.

###

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Subject:	No government rate setting on surprise medical billing
Date:	2019/11/18 14:39:30
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

Nov. 18, 2019

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

No government rate setting on surprise medical billing

Nov. 18, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging Congress and the Trump administration to reject any government rate setting proposal on surprise medical billing:

“The problem of surprise medical billing has become a hot topic in Washington, D.C. but government rate setting is an unacceptable solution. When there's a dispute between doctors and insurance companies, patients should not have to resolve it, which is why Congress and the Trump administration should consider an approach that institutes an independent, neutral, third party system for billing dispute resolution that will put patient needs first. That way, families can focus on their care rather than completing bureaucratic tasks just to access benefits, or worse being stuck with a surprise billing that cannot be paid. When [New York and Texas](#)

[agree on something](#), then perhaps it might just be a common sense, bipartisan solution that can be used to address surprise medical billing.”

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Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org to arrange an interview.

###

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Subject:	Attorney General Barr is right, the left is deconstructing the Constitution and the Presidency
Date:	2019/11/19 10:46:15
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

Nov. 19, 2019

Permission to republish original opeds and cartoons granted.

Attorney General Barr is right, the left is deconstructing the Constitution and the Presidency

Attorney General William Barr is right. The revolution we are witnessing today by the so-called resistance is the deconstruction of the Constitution and the presidency writ large by courts implementing nationwide injunctions on clearly constitutional presidential acts and Congressional attempts to usurp executive power away to unaccountable administrative state agencies. Above all other officers, it is the President who explicitly in the Constitution must swear an oath to uphold the Constitution, and who ultimately safeguards limited government and the rule of law, which cannot prevail without the separation of powers. Now we have an impeachment whose central premise is Trump's temporary decision to withhold military aid to Ukraine while he considered the future prospects of the U.S. relationship with that country and whether or not to request a rescission of that funding from Congress. We have seen how the administrative state reacts when a president has his own ideas about foreign policy and the removal of subordinate

officers. This is the deep state showing its teeth. You fight the wars they want — or else. But they are the true tyrants, the unaccountable, unelected and unremovable bureaucrats who answer to no one if they do not answer to the President.

Cartoon: Braveheart

Is former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch a profile in courage?

Video: The State Dept. was concerned about the Bidens & Burisma, so why can't Trump ask the same question?

When Marie Yovanovitch came up for Senate confirmation to be ambassador to Ukraine in 2016, the State Department anticipated former Vice President Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, working at Burisma Holdings, a company that was under active investigation for corruption, posed a conflict of interests to the U.S. government in dealing with that country.

No government rate setting on surprise medical billing

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "The problem of surprise medical billing has become a hot topic in Washington, D.C. but government rate setting is an unacceptable solution. When there's a dispute between doctors and insurance companies, patients should not have to resolve it, which is why Congress and the Trump administration should consider an approach that institutes an independent, neutral, third party system for billing dispute resolution that will put patient needs first. That way, families can focus on their care rather than completing bureaucratic tasks just to access benefits, or worse being stuck with a surprise billing that cannot be paid. When New York and Texas agree on something, then perhaps it might just be a common sense, bipartisan solution that can be used to address surprise medical billing."

Nicole Russell: Obama tried to discriminate against conservative faith groups. Trump is reversing that.

"It's not entirely new for federal agencies to introduce regulations that reflect a particular administration's policy agenda, but it is a serious problem when an administration's executive actions become the de facto means of lawmaking.

That's not how the Constitution requires laws to be made. In this case, President Donald Trump isn't making new policy. He's undoing bad policy that was a gross overreach when the Obama administration introduced it. There was no law directing Health and Human Services to expand anti-discrimination laws, but former President

Barack Obama went ahead and did it anyway, just before his final term expired. Trump is simply undoing this—not only for the betterment of faith-based adoption agencies and the needy kids they serve, but for the rule of law and the regulatory agency that would enforce it.”

Attorney General Barr is right, the left is deconstructing the Constitution and the Presidency



By Robert Romano

Apparently now saying that Article II of the Federal Constitution's vesting of executive power to the President was an unambiguous, broad grant of unitary executive authority to the President of the United States by the Framers of the Constitution, and arguing for preserving such separation of powers from encroachment, is an impeachable offense.

That's what former White House ethics counsel Richard Painter thinks about a [speech](#) Attorney General William Barr delivered on Nov. 15 to the Federalist Society. Painter wrote on Twitter in reaction, "Another lunatic authoritarian speech as Barr goes from attacking 'radical secularists' at [@NDLaw](#) to one month later attacking the 'resistance' at [@FedSoc](#). Impeach Barr now!"

U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-N.J.) called for Barr's law licenses to be stripped in a tweet on Nov. 16, [writing](#), "Yesterday AG Barr addressed a radical political group and gave one of the most vicious partisan screeds ever uttered by a US cabinet officer. Barr says trump should have king-like powers. Barr is a liar and a fanatic and should be impeached and stripped of his law licenses."

Former Assistant U.S. Attorney Mimi Rocah similarly blasted Barr's speech, [tweeting](#) a story from Law & Crime entitled, "[Lawyers Call for AG Barr's Impeachment After Federalist Society Speech.](#)" Earlier, Rocah had blasted Barr's speech, [writing](#), "This is so outrageously inappropriate for an AG to be saying. You are the head of the DOJ for all Americans not just the ones in the Federalist Society. Please start acting like it."

Barr's thought crime? Adopting the Alexander Hamilton position on the strong, unitary executive under Article II, enumerated in the Federalist Papers including in the [Federalist No. 70](#) in 1788.

Therein, Hamilton argued, "Energy in the Executive is a leading character in the definition of good government. It is essential to the protection of the community against foreign attacks; it is not less essential to the steady administration of the laws; to the protection of property against those irregular and high-handed combinations which sometimes interrupt the ordinary course of justice; to the security of liberty against the enterprises and assaults of ambition, of faction, and of anarchy."

Which is exactly what Barr said in his speech, declaring, “The consensus for a strong, independent Executive arose from the Framers’ experience in the Revolution and under the Articles of Confederation. They had seen that the War had almost been lost and was a bumbling enterprise because of the lack of strong Executive leadership. Under the Articles of Confederation, they had been mortified at the inability of the United States to protect itself against foreign impositions or to be taken seriously on the international stage. They had also seen that, after the Revolution, too many States had adopted constitutions with weak Executives overly subordinate to the Legislatures. Where this had been the case, state governments had proven incompetent and indeed tyrannical.”

Barr is right. The revolution we are witnessing today by the so-called resistance is the deconstruction of the Constitution and the Article II presidency writ large by courts implementing nationwide injunctions on clearly constitutional presidential acts like the travel ban or building the wall using reprogrammed monies, and Congressional attempts to usurp executive power away to unaccountable administrative state agencies.

The struggle we are seeing today is over whether we will have a Constitution at all. Above all other officers, it is the President who explicitly in the Constitution must swear an oath to uphold the Constitution, and who ultimately safeguards limited government and the rule of law, which cannot prevail without the separation of powers.

Barr continued, “From these practical experiences [under the Articles of Confederation], the Framers had come to appreciate that, to be successful, Republican government required the capacity to act with energy, consistency and decisiveness. They had come to agree that those attributes could best be provided by making the Executive power independent of the divided counsels of the Legislative branch and vesting the Executive power in the hands of a solitary individual, regularly elected for a limited term by the Nation as a whole.”

And, the executive power was meant to be separate and distinct from the judicial and legislative powers. Per Barr, “Just as the great separation-of-powers theorists — Polybius, Montesquieu, Locke — had, the Framers thought of Executive power as a distinct specie of power.”

This includes “carrying into effect the laws passed by the Legislature — that is, applying the general rules to a particular situation”; “the power to handle essential sovereign functions — such as the conduct of foreign relations and the prosecution of war — which by their very nature cannot be directed by a pre-existing legal regime but rather demand speed, secrecy, unity of purpose, and prudent judgment to meet contingent circumstances”; “to address exigent circumstances that demand quick action to protect the well-being of the Nation but on which the law is either silent or inadequate — such as dealing with a plague or natural disaster”; and “the Executive’s powers of internal management... [that are] necessary for the President to superintend and control the Executive function, including the powers necessary to protect the independence of the Executive branch and the confidentiality of its internal deliberations.”

This is most certainly the Hamiltonian view of executive power, and the one that was adopted by the very first administration of President George Washington and has been used as the basis by subsequent administrations. This is not a controversial view of executive power, as seen in 2008’s 558-page tome, [“The Unitary Executive: Presidential Power from Washington to Bush”](#) by Steven G. Calabresi, Christopher S. Yoo in 2008.

In it, the authors argue there has been a unanimous consensus among every president on the question of unitary executive power: “This book shows that all of our nation’s presidents have believed in the theory of the unitary executive,” including the powers to direct and if deemed necessary, to remove other executive branch officials.

Calabresi and Yoo continue, “Big fights about whether the Constitution grants the president the removal power have erupted frequently, but each time the president in power has claimed that the Constitution the president power to remove and direct subordinates in the executive branch. And each time the president has prevailed, and Congress has backed down. The Constitution gives presidents the power to control their subordinates by vesting all of the executive power in one, and only one, person: the president of the United States. All subordinate nonlegislative and nonjudicial officials exercise executive power, and they do so only by implicit or explicit delegation from the president. They are thus all subject to the president’s powers of direction and control. The truth of this observation has been acknowledged not only by our greatest presidents, but also their least distinguished brethren. We show here that all forty-three president

have consistently adhered to a practice of construing the Constitution as creating a unitary executive and giving them the removal power...”

Calabresi and Yoo add, “[T]he consistency of the historical record is rendered all the more striking when viewed in light of the way presidential power has ebbed and flowed over the course of our nation’s history. Obviously the country has had strong presidents, such as Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and the two Roosevelts, and we have had weak presidents like Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, and Warren Harding. Strikingly, these well-known fluctuations in the relative power of Congress and the president have had almost no impact on the consistency with which presidents have asserted their sole power to control the execution of the laws. Indeed, history reveals that all presidents — strong and weak — have defended the unitary executive ever since 1789.”

And it all goes back to the Washington administration, in which Hamilton was a key figure. There’s a reason why in comparative politics classes the U.S. system is often called a presidential system. Hamilton, the nation’s first Treasury Secretary and Washington’s most trusted advisor, is that reason. He helped organize the federal bureaucracy, not as an unaccountable administrative state, but one that was answerable to the President.

In the Federalist No. 70, Hamilton argued against executive by committee, and made the case for why we only have one president at a time for very good reason, writing, “Wherever two or more persons are engaged in any common enterprise or pursuit, there is always danger of difference of opinion. If it be a public trust or office, in which they are clothed with equal dignity and authority, there is peculiar danger of personal emulation and even animosity. From either, and especially from all these causes, the most bitter dissensions are apt to spring.”

Leading to what? Hamilton warned, “Whenever these happen, they lessen the respectability, weaken the authority, and distract the plans and operation of those whom they divide. If they should unfortunately assail the supreme executive magistracy of a country, consisting of a plurality of persons, they might impede or frustrate the most important measures of the government, in the most critical emergencies of the state. And what is still worse, they might split the community into the most violent and irreconcilable factions, adhering differently to the different individuals who composed the magistracy.”

This view found its way into the Washington administration unambiguously, with the first exercises of implicit executive powers, including [suspending a treaty with France](#) when it went to war with Great Britain with the 1793 Proclamation of Neutrality.

And Hamilton was right. In the age of Trump, we have court cases over the President's clearly constitutional exercise of laws Congress has enacted and that do give the President clear grants of power, as [in the travel ban case](#).

Trump was given a special counsel over the firing of an FBI director, James Comey, who lied to President Donald Trump about the extent of the investigation into his campaign and administration, on [false allegations](#) that he and his campaign had been agents of Russia. It is an irony that the conspiracy theory itself was [debunked](#) by none other than Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

And now we have an impeachment whose central premise is Trump's temporary decision to withhold military aid to Ukraine while he [considered](#) the future prospects of the U.S. relationship with that country and whether or not to request a rescission of that funding from Congress.

We have seen how the administrative state reacts when a president has his own ideas about foreign policy and the removal of subordinate officers. This is the deep state showing its teeth. You fight the wars they want — or else. But they are the true tyrants, these unaccountable, unelected and unremovable bureaucrats, who answer to no one if they do not answer to the President.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Braveheart

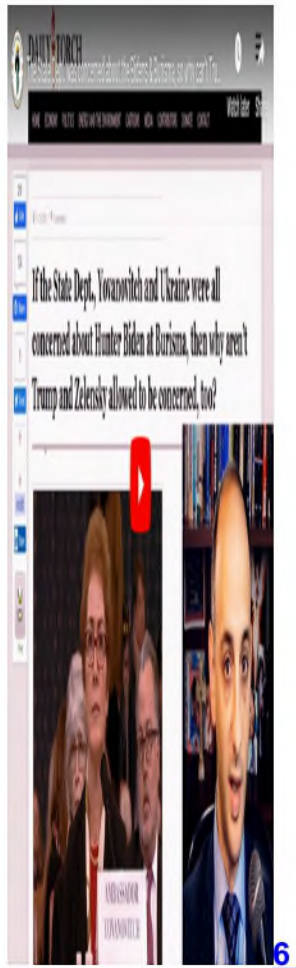
By A.F. Branco



[6](#)

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Video: The State Dept. was concerned about the Bidens & Burisma, so why can't Trump ask the same question?



To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRXA-Rr8VOY>



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No government rate setting on surprise medical billing

Nov. 18, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging Congress and the Trump

administration to reject any government rate setting proposal on surprise medical billing:

"The problem of surprise medical billing has become a hot topic in Washington, D.C. but government rate setting is an unacceptable solution. When there's a dispute between doctors and insurance companies, patients should not have to resolve it, which is why Congress and the Trump administration should consider an approach that institutes an independent, neutral, third party system for billing dispute resolution that will put patient needs first. That way, families can focus on their care rather than completing bureaucratic tasks just to access benefits, or worse being stuck with a surprise billing that cannot be paid. When [New York and Texas agree on something](#), then perhaps it might just be a common sense, bipartisan solution that can be used to address surprise medical billing."

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TOO HOT NOT TO NOTE
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ALG Editor's Note: [In the following featured column from the Daily Signal's Nicole Russell](#), the Trump administration is undoing discrimination against religious groups that occurred during the Obama administration:



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Obama tried to discriminate against conservative faith groups. Trump is reversing that.

By Nicole Russell

Several faith-based adoption agencies have been tangled in litigation over allegedly “discriminating” against prospective parents. Thankfully, a new Trump administration rule could alleviate some of their legal battles, protect religious liberty, and help kids in need of adoption.

On Nov. 1, the Department of Health and Human Services [proposed](#) a new rule that would reverse key parts of a 2016 rule issued by the Obama administration.

The 2016 rule barred the agency from giving out grants to organizations—like adoption agencies—who refused to place children with same-sex couples. This new rule would roll back that regulation and require the agency to avoid discriminating against private entities who operate according to their faith, according to federal nondiscrimination law.

Health and Human Services stressed that “the federal government not infringe on religious freedom in its operation of HHS grant programs and address the impact of regulatory actions on small entities.”

While the announcement didn’t explicitly mention adoption agencies, it could very well affect the faith-based adoption agencies that receive federal grants and which have been accused of using their faith as a guise for bigotry, because they believe marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Some state leaders, like Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, have been trying to force faith-based adoption agencies to change their religious beliefs about marriage or else close their doors.

The state’s main target has been St. Vincent Catholic Charities. Even though St. Vincent had placed children with same-sex couples, the state went after it because it wouldn’t organize adoption home studies with gay couples—something the state required of grant recipients.

Nessel flashed her own bigoted views on Twitter earlier this year.

The judge who ruled on this case, Robert Jonker, pointed out the state wasn’t just targeting St. Vincent’s public actions, but its belief system. He said “the state’s real

goal is not to promote nondiscriminatory child placements, but to stamp out St. Vincent's religious belief and replace it with the state's own."

In March, Michigan reached a settlement, along with the ACLU, against the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, St. Vincent Catholic Charities, an adoptive family, and a former foster child who had joined the suit.

The settlement affirmed a 2015 law that said groups that receive state funds and refuse to provide foster care or adoption services that conflict with their religious beliefs are actually in violation of federal anti-discrimination laws.

Fortunately, this settlement was challenged and a [federal judge ruled in their favor](#) in September, halting the attorney general's discrimination campaign.

In [his opinion](#), Jonker clearly found that the discrimination at work was not St. Vincent's bigotry guised as faith, but state animus toward religious organizations, even ones whose specific aim is to help needy children find loving homes.

The Trump administration's newly proposed rule would affirm rulings like this.

While many mainstream news organizations are framing this new proposal as one that will now allow faith-based adoption agencies to "discriminate," the more accurate way to view it is that it would roll back the anti-discrimination rules Obama had implemented during his administration.

Those rules were a veiled attack on religious liberty and the consciences of faith-based families and adoption agencies.

Obama claimed it was discriminatory for faith-based agencies to live in accordance with their belief that marriage is between a man and a woman, a pretty standard teaching among many mainstream religions in America.

In reality, it is far more discriminatory for the state to require people, an organization, or a business to suspend their religious beliefs or violate them.

Upending these unconstitutional provisions is the right thing for the Trump administration to do, but it's not clear how much this will help faith-based adoption agencies who are currently fighting discrimination lawsuits.

It all depends on whether states acquiesce to the new rule or continue to fight in court. While this proposed rule would remove the threat of the federal government stepping in under a federal anti-discrimination law, it wouldn't necessarily prevent the states from engaging in these legal battles.

St. Vincent's isn't the only adoption provider caught up in this legal fight. Bethany Christian Services and Catholic Social Services are engaged in a similar fight with Philadelphia's Department of Human Services.

In addition, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services has been [suing New Hope](#), a religious nonprofit, because it prioritized placing children in homes with a married heterosexual couple.

That's four faith-based organizations that could continue to live by their Christian beliefs if the respective states honored the newly proposed rule. But of course, that's not guaranteed.

It's nearly impossible to pinpoint exactly how many children might be affected by this new rule. But we can get an idea by looking to Michigan.

When Jonker ruled in the adoption agencies' favor, he [pointed out](#) that "Michigan has a chronic shortage of foster and adoptive homes" and that there were "approximately 13,000 children in foster care, about 2,000 of whom have a permanency goal of adoption."

The state works with 57 agencies, most of which are private.

"[I]n the last four fiscal years," he said, "St. Vincent has served an average of 74 children in its foster care program every year, and through its work over 100 adoptions for foster children were finalized."

It's not entirely new for federal agencies to introduce regulations that reflect a particular administration's policy agenda, but it is a serious problem when an

administration's executive actions become the de facto means of lawmaking. That's not how the Constitution requires laws to be made.

In this case, President Donald Trump isn't making new policy. He's undoing bad policy that was a gross overreach when the Obama administration introduced it.

There was no law directing Health and Human Services to expand anti-discrimination laws, but former President Barack Obama went ahead and did it anyway, just before his final term expired.

Trump is simply undoing this—not only for the betterment of faith-based adoption agencies and the needy kids they serve, but for the rule of law and the regulatory agency that would enforce it.

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Type:	Note



6

Nov. 26, 2019

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Hunter Biden may have to pay back the millions he made, which were stolen from the people of Ukraine, under U.S. law

Once the Democrats and their quislings inside the bureaucracy learned that the President was looking into the Ukrainian natural gas company, Burisma, accused of stealing from the Ukrainian government during the Viktor Yanukovich administration, that had funneled millions to Hunter Biden, they knew they were in trouble. You see, Hunter Biden could owe the millions he made in Ukraine from Burisma back to the people of Ukraine. Under 22 U.S.C. Section 8904(a): "The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall assist, on an expedited basis as appropriate, the Government of Ukraine to identify, secure, and recover assets linked to acts of corruption by Viktor Yanukovich, members of his family, or other former or current officials of the Government of Ukraine or their accomplices in any jurisdiction through appropriate programs...." Ukraine has expanded his office looking at the theft by Burisma and the company's head, Mykola Zlochevsky, of stealing \$33 million from the country's

central bank. The monies are all fungible, so it is likely Biden profited from this alleged theft while at Burisma, even if it was years later. Were it just using the office of the Vice-President to protect his son's highly questionable "business dealings," it would have been bad enough. But now we learn that Hunter and another scion of the elite were neck deep in the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility (TALF) program, as Rosemont Capital benefitted from the program to the tune of \$130 million. The Bidens should give the money back.

Cartoon: Misgivings

Happy Thanksgiving from Elizabeth Warren and Mitt Romney.

Video: John Bolton thinks presidents can end treaties w/ allies, but not military aid to non-treaty allies?

Former National Security Advisor John Bolton and the State Department have all taken the position that presidents can terminate treaties under their inherent executive power under Article II of the Constitution, even with military allies. But when it comes to ending or even reviewing military aid to Ukraine, a non-treaty ally, the administrative state wants to say the President lacks legal authority.

Surprise medical billing should be addressed by independent neutral third party boards, not price fixing

If you have ever used an out-of-network medical provider under your health insurance, whether for an emergency or just for additional services, it is possible you have received a surprise medical billing, often costing far more than if the provider had been in-network. It can even happen if you're at an in-network facility but the physician was out-of-network. Fortunately, there are alternatives to government rate setting. U.S. Rep. Phil Roe (R-Texas) has a bill that would address the issue of surprise medical billing utilizing neutral third parties, called independent dispute resolution. Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) have similar legislation in the Senate. This approach is used in states as diverse as Texas and New York, with great success and lets patients focus on their lives. In states where this is not the case, patients are often left to be the ones to resolve billing disputes by acting as a go-between for doctors and insurance companies.

Hunter Biden may have to pay back the millions he made, which were stolen from the people of Ukraine, under U.S. law



6

By Bill Wilson

The one, overriding impression that Democrats, media and the left have left on many Americans after two weeks of the “impeachment” circus” is not what they intended. They have left the unmistakable impression of fear; near-panic levels of terror. And from what is now seeping out, they have every reason to feel this way.

You see, their con-game is about to be exposed. The merciless corruption and venal disregard for the American people that has become their entire operating model is on the verge of being dragged through the streets for all to see and ridicule.

At every turn, the true matter before the nation is becoming more and more obvious – the deep and systemic corruption that the Obama administration imposed on America, the disdain of the American people by the globalist elite, and the desperation to hide the facts from the public even at the cost of the legitimacy America’s most central institutions.

The list is long. From the vile action of the communist-supporting John Brennan of Obama’s CIA to the likely criminal “leadership” of the FBI under Comey, to the globalist hit-squad at the State Department, the picture is one of arrogant disregard for the law, an almost adolescent rebellion against the nation that has given them so much. And while the list of violators is long, it is fitting that the crux of the current debate starts with the outright, open corruption of the Biden family, especially Hunter Biden.

Hunter Biden is the essence of the modern leftist movement; self-important, narcissistic to the extreme and greedy beyond words. Once the Democrats and their quislings inside the bureaucracy learned that the President was looking into the Ukrainian natural gas company, Burisma, accused of stealing from the Ukrainian government during the Viktor Yanukovich administration, that had funneled millions to Hunter Biden, they knew they had to double down. And in classic fashion, Democrats and the left have engaged in an orgy of casting accusations against other people of their own worst crimes.

Hunter Biden could owe the millions he made in Ukraine from Burisma back to the people of Ukraine as a part of an asset recovery process under U.S. law. [Under 22 U.S.C. Section 8904\(a\)](#): “The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall assist, on an expedited basis as appropriate, the Government of Ukraine to identify, secure, and recover assets linked to acts of corruption by Viktor Yanukovich, members of his family, or other former or current officials of the Government of Ukraine or their accomplices in any jurisdiction through appropriate programs, including the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative of the Department of Justice.”

And now we know the new Ukrainian Prosecutor General Ruslan Ryaboshapka has [expanded](#) his office looking at the theft by Burisma and the company’s head, Mykola Zlochevsky, of stealing \$33 million from the country’s central bank. The monies are all fungible, so it is likely Biden profited from this alleged theft while at

Burisma, even if it was years later. It looks like he was hired to keep this investigation from happening, so giving the money back is the least the younger Biden could do.

Were it just using the office of the Vice-President to protect his son's highly questionable "business dealings," it would have been bad enough. But now we learn that Hunter and another scion of the elite were [neck deep](#) in the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility (TALF) program, as Rosemont Capital benefitted from the program [to the tune of \\$130 million](#).

TALF is the very definition of corporatist theft, a scheme [hatched in the early days of the Obama regime](#) that funneled tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars to favored actors of the political class.

The scam worked like this. A group of "approved" investors went to failing banks and bought asset-based securities. The "investors" would put up as little as 5 percent of the purchase price while the Federal Reserve — the taxpayers — paid the rest. But over the course of the term of the security, 100 percent of the payments went to the investors, nothing to the public. And when the deals failed — when the income did not support repayment of the loan, the investors were allowed to just walk away, pay nothing!

It was a license to loot. And ole Hunter was in on the deal from Day One. "This is a great example of the suspicion of many Americans that these bailouts were used to benefit connected insiders while ordinary Americans went broke," said Tom Anderson, director of the Government Integrity Project at the National Legal and Policy Center, an organization that was critical of TALF at the time.

The establishment powers that be do not want the American people to get a clear view of the depth of corruption that has infected our nation — under both Democrat and Republican administrations. That is what the impeachment scam is all about — a massive cover-up of a system that is in free-fall, Love him or hate him, nobody can deny that the great contribution of Donald Trump has been — and God willing will continue to be — the exposure of this venality.

Hunter Biden should be made to pay back any money he got from Rosemont that depended on U.S. taxpayers, and any money he got from Burisma, which was stolen

from the people of Ukraine. As the circus continues into the next act, everyone should remember that none of this is about Donald Trump. This is an excise of self-loathing by a corrupt establishment best exemplified by the Biden mob.

Bill Wilson is the President of the Market Research Foundation and a former board member and former President of Americans for Limited Government

Cartoon: Misgivings

By A.F. Branco



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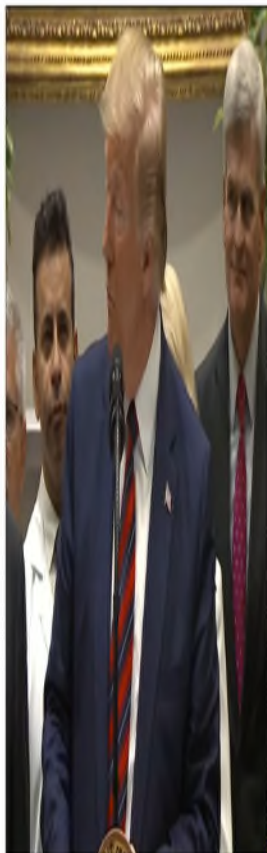
Video: John Bolton thinks presidents can end treaties w/ allies, but not military aid to non-treaty allies?



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To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFXII0hpenE>

Surprise medical billing should be addressed by independent neutral third party boards, not price fixing



[6](#)

By Robert Romano

If you have ever used an out-of-network medical provider under your health insurance, whether for an emergency or just for additional services, it is possible you have received a surprise medical billing, often costing far more than if the provider had been in-network. It can even happen if you're at an in-network facility but the physician was out-of-network.

President Donald Trump [said in May](#) that he is committed to ending the practice.

Unfortunately, some of the solutions being pursued by House Democrats under House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) are anything but, and instead will result in onerous government rate setting for out-of-network providers, which can do a lot more harm than good. California has a similar law.

Shant H. Garabedian, D.O., an emergency medical physician, writing for the Tennessean on Aug. 30, [finds](#) that the Alexander proposal “would establish set rates for physician reimbursement also known as benchmarking — a solution supported by the insurance lobby. His proposal would allow insurance companies to set physician payment prices by cancelling previously negotiated contracts and essentially forcing physicians into new contracts with unsustainably low rates.”

The result? More hospital closures in Tennessee (and everywhere else), which is already a major problem, making it impossible for residents to reach a hospital in time when there’s a real emergency and every minute counts. These days, physician shortages are becoming a greater problem as well, especially for rural communities.

Fortunately, there are alternatives to the Alexander approach. U.S. Rep. Phil Roe (R-Texas) has [a bill](#) that would address the issue of surprise medical billing utilizing neutral third parties, called independent dispute resolution. Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) have [similar legislation](#) in the Senate.

This approach is used in states [as diverse as Texas and New York](#), with great success and lets patients focus on their lives, instead patients are often left to be the ones to resolve billing disputes by acting as a go-between for doctors and insurance companies.

A third party board would take the issue out of the hands of the insurance companies, whose goal is to have the government regulate prices, driving medical providers out of business, and create a competitive, negotiated price system.

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning issued a statement favoring the independent third party solution: “The problem of surprise medical billing has become a hot topic in Washington, D.C. but government rate setting is an unacceptable solution. When there’s a dispute between doctors and insurance companies, patients should not have to resolve it, which is why Congress and the Trump administration should consider an approach that institutes an independent, neutral, third party system for billing dispute resolution that will put patient needs first. That way, families can focus on their care rather than completing bureaucratic tasks just to access benefits, or worse being stuck with a surprise billing that cannot be paid.”

Manning concluded, “When New York and Texas agree on something, then perhaps it might just be a common sense, bipartisan solution that can be used to address surprise medical billing.”

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

Dec. 5, 2019

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

Pelosi impeachment push hurts Americans with surprise medical bills

Dec. 5, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) to get to work on addressing surprise medical billings by considering legislation establishing third-party independent mechanisms for billing dispute resolution:

"Nancy Pelosi's announcement that the House of Representatives is continuing its farcical impeachment push should be extremely disappointing to everyone who was hoping that Congress would focus on important issues like surprise medical billing, which catches families off guard with unanticipated medical costs after getting treatment out-of-network. There is a relatively easy, bipartisan legislative fix to this issue that hammers the pocketbooks of too many Americans, and those [bills offered by](#) U.S. Rep. Phil Roe and Senators Bill Cassidy and Michael Bennet, that

creates an independent decisionmaker to settle billing disputes between doctors and insurance companies, taking powerless patients out of the bill collectors' crosshairs. The question Nancy Pelosi should ask herself is how many Americans are going to be bankrupted by surprise medical bills because she is engaged in personal partisan impeachment vendetta."

To view online: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=23e851cd-7fbc48b1-23e860f2-0cc47adc5fa2-968363a045da0b0c&u=https://getliberty.org/2019/12/pelosi-impeachment-push-hurts-americans-with-surprise-medical-bills/>

Attachments:

"Surprise medical billing should be addressed by independent neutral third party boards, not price fixing," By Robert Romano, Nov. 26, 2019 at <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=4716384e-1b422132-47160971-0cc47adc5fa2-ca3cbe703d71f5d5&u=http://dailytorch.com/2019/11/surprise-medical-billing-should-be-addressed-by-independent-neutral-third-party-boards-not-price-fixing/>

Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org to arrange an interview.

###

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Subject:	Compromise on government rate-setting legislation for surprise medical billing misses the mark
Date:	2019/12/09 11:46:09
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

Dec. 9, 2019

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

Compromise on government rate-setting legislation for surprise medical billing misses the mark

Dec. 9, 2019, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement rejecting [a deal](#) between House and Senate negotiators on a bill to address surprise medical billing with government rate setting:

"A compromise bill from U.S. Representatives Greg Walden and Frank Pallone, and Sen. Lamar Alexander on surprise medical bills, if it still relies on government-rate setting will be a disaster for patients. It favors insurance companies, who will have a perverse incentive to remove rural community hospitals from their networks in order to compel artificially low reimbursement rates, leading to more hospital closures and limiting access. Bills offered by U.S. Rep. Phil Roe and Senators Bill Cassidy and Michael Bennet instead establish an independent board to settle billing

disputes between doctors and insurance companies. While insurance companies may have the power in D.C., they are health care payment vehicles, not health care itself, and billing disputes should be independently decided to ensure continued quality health care access for all Americans."

To view online: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=2db39dd3-71e694c0-2db3acec-0cc47adb5650-cb6dd8c77cdfade7&u=https://getliberty.org/2019/12/compromise-on-government-rate-setting-legislation-for-surprise-medical-billing-misses-the-mark/>

Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org.

###

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From:	Americans for Limited Government <media@limitgov.org>
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Subject:	After impeachment, Congress should address surprise medical billing, avoid price fixing
Date:	2020/01/30 13:39:35
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

Jan. 30, 2020

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

After impeachment, Congress should address surprise medical billing, avoid price fixing

Jan. 30, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging Congress to address the issues of surprise medical billing after the Senate impeachment trial ends:

“Once the Senate finishes exonerating President Donald Trump of Adam Schiff and Nancy Pelosi’s fantasy impeachment charges, Congress will be facing many tough issues. Surprise medical billing is one of these that are likely to emerge and one proposed ‘solution’ is a trap that must be avoided. One-sized fits all medical pricing is being pushed by the health insurance industry fixes rates to the benefit of insurance companies and detriment of health care providers. The failed state of California has already tried the one-price fits all model and in just three years is beginning to suffer from shortages of physicians and other health care providers

who are being priced out of existence by insurers. When Congress deals with surprise medical billing, it is important for them to ensure that markets are maintained and there is a way for insurers and health care providers to iron out their payment disputes between themselves, protecting patients from surprise bills which insurers refuse to pay.”

To view online: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=49c38a89-1597a3a2-49c3bbb6-0cc47a6d17cc-9944fe4ba94121e9&u=https://getliberty.org/2020/01/after-impeachment-congress-should-address-surprise-medical-billing-avoid-price-fixing/>

Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org.

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Subject:	Liberal know-it-all billionaires side with insurance companies on surprise medical billing
Date:	2020/02/03 10:20:33
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

Feb. 3, 2020

Permission to republish original opeds and cartoons granted.

Liberal know-it-all billionaires side with insurance companies on surprise medical billing

You may have never heard of them, but there is a new, young billionaire couple determined to leave their mark on society. John and Laura Arnold are not interested in the type of philanthropy that builds libraries and college buildings or feeds, clothes, shelters, and educates the poor. No, like George Soros, the Arnolds are on a mission to “change the country,” whether we like it or not. When these arrogant elitists are not busy trying to erode our gun rights, promoting abortion, funding spying on citizens, or trying to upend our electoral system, they are busy trying to cut medical professionals pay. Specifically, the liberal power couple wants to address the issue of surprise medical billing by reducing the amount of money that medical professionals are paid for providing out-of-network care to patients. Of course, due to the fact that they are siding with the insurance industry, it does raise questions about whether or not they are invested in any insurance companies and stand to

grow richer if their policy wishes are enacted. Maybe someone needs to tell them to shut up and drink their champagne.

Time for the Senate to end Democrat impeachment nightmare

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "The Democrat majority in the House of Representatives has embarrassed themselves and have been exposed for their craven effort to politically weaponize the once somber impeachment process. For those still clinging to the idea that if the House Democrats can just call more witnesses on the Senate floor that somehow they will stumble upon something resembling an impeachable offense, you will have your chances in November of 2020 to make your voice heard. But please know that the House impeachment was never about convicting Donald Trump, instead it was nothing more than a chance for coastal politicians to preen in front of cameras and raise money to fund their future political ambitions. The House impeachment was nothing more than Kabuki Theatre on a national stage with fundraising appeals accompanying every manufactured highlight. It is truly sad that the House's political ambitions were put ahead of our national interest, but in some ways it was good for America to witness the lengths Democrats will go to win power as we head into the 2020 election."

Santorum: 'House articles of impeachment in the eyes of senators are not sufficient to remove a president'

Former Sen. Rick Santorum: "[T]hey believe that the House case as presented in the articles of impeachment is not sufficient on its face to vote to remove a president... They're voting on articles of impeachment that the House presented. If the House articles of impeachment in the eyes of senators are not sufficient to remove a president, who cares what the case brings."

Liberal know-it-all billionaires side with insurance companies on surprise medical billing



6

By Richard McCarty

You may have never heard of them, but there is a new, young billionaire couple determined to leave their mark on society. John and Laura Arnold are not interested in the type of philanthropy that builds libraries and college buildings or feeds, clothes, shelters, and educates the poor. No, like George Soros, the Arnolds are on a mission to “[change the country](#),” whether we like it or not. When these arrogant elitists are not busy trying to erode our [gun rights](#), promoting [abortion](#), funding [spying](#) on citizens, or trying to [upend](#) our electoral system, they are busy trying to cut medical professionals pay. Specifically, the liberal power couple wants to address the issue of surprise medical billing by reducing the amount of money that medical professionals are paid for providing out-of-network care to patients.

It is unclear why a guy who made his fortune betting on natural gas prices and a lawyer who worked in the oil industry would feel the need to weigh in on medical billing. But apparently they do. Of course, due to the fact that they are siding with the insurance industry, it does raise questions about whether or not they are invested in any insurance companies and stand to grow richer if their policy wishes are enacted.

To be sure, surprise medical billing is a problem. Even if you go to an in-network hospital for care, you could be treated by an out-of-network doctor and wind up with an unexpectedly large bill. There are a couple main proposals to address the issue.

One proposal, which the Arnolds support, would force out-of-network healthcare providers to accept whatever an insurance company pays in-network providers for their services. It is claimed that this proposal would save insurance companies money and, in turn, reduce costs for consumers and the government. Of course, it could lead to more providers exiting the field, which could be particularly problematic for rural areas that already lack adequate access to health care.

Forcing medical care providers to take whatever an insurance company offers is concerning. If this were to be made an acceptable practice, what would stop the government from arbitrarily reducing prices of anything that it purchases? Imagine the amounts of money that could be saved if the government required office supply companies and cleaning companies to sell their products and services at cost. While that might seem absurd, is it any more absurd than arbitrarily reducing medical providers' payments? Just before Enron's implosion, John Arnold received an \$8 million bonus. While he's happy to suggest that the government should pass legislation that would lead to medical professionals being paid less, one suspects that he would have objected to a law that reduced his bonus even if it saved the government money.

A better proposal would require binding arbitration if a health insurance company and a medical care provider could not agree on pricing. As with the other proposal, insurers and providers — rather than patients — would be responsible for resolving disputes over surprise bills. States as divergent as Texas and New York have already passed such legislation.

For a number of years the tight has been telling “woke” entertainers to kindly “shut up and sing.” Now it is time for the Right to deliver a message to the “woke” billionaires, like George Soros, Tom Steyer, and John and Laura Arnold: “Shut up and drink your champagne.” Just because these liberal billionaires have been financially successful does not mean that they have any special insight into health care, abortion, law enforcement, or criminal justice policies. If they are not adequately fulfilled by their champagne-drinking and feel the need to give back to society, maybe they should reconsider feeding, clothing, sheltering, and educating the poor – even though they might find it boring or beneath them.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research at Americans for Limited Government Foundation.



algpessreleases.PNG

Time for the Senate to end Democrat impeachment nightmare

Jan. 31, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging to Senate to acquit President Donald Trump of all charges:

“The Democrat majority in the House of Representatives has embarrassed themselves and have been exposed for their craven effort to politically weaponize the once somber impeachment process.

“For those still clinging to the idea that if the House Democrats can just call more witnesses on the Senate floor that somehow they will stumble upon something resembling an impeachable offense, you will have your chances in November of 2020 to make your voice heard. But please know that the House impeachment was never about convicting Donald Trump, instead it was nothing more than a chance for coastal politicians to preen in front of cameras and raise money to fund their future political ambitions. The House impeachment was nothing more than Kabuki

Theatre on a national stage with fundraising appeals accompanying every manufactured highlight.

"It is truly sad that the House's political ambitions were put ahead of our national interest, but in some ways it was good for America to witness the lengths Democrats will go to win power as we head into the 2020 election."

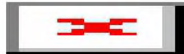
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TOO HOT NOT TO NOTE
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ALG Editor's Note: [In the following featured column from Bizpac Review's Vivek Saxena](#), former Sen. Rick Santorum makes the case against the articles of impeachment and in favor of acquittal:



BizpacReview.png

Santorum: 'House articles of impeachment in the eyes of senators are not sufficient to remove a president'

By Vivek Saxena

Despite all the tears that were shed after the GOP-led Senate voted to not allow witnesses to testify in President Donald Trump's impeachment trial, the fact remains that were no legitimate charges for them to testify about in the first place, according to former Sen. Rick Santorum.

In a heated discussion Friday evening with his colleagues at CNN, where he's been employed since early 2017, the former Pennsylvania senator repeatedly declared

that the House Democrats' case against the president has been flawed from the get-go.

"It's because, as you heard from many senators who have commented since, you will hear from many more, they believe that the House case as presented in the articles of impeachment is not sufficient on its face to vote to remove a president," he said early Friday evening after his colleagues [began complaining](#) about the no witnesses vote.

"They're voting on articles of impeachment that the House presented. If the House articles of impeachment in the eyes of senators are not sufficient to remove a president, who cares what the case brings," he added.

Former U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara, who was [fired from his post](#) by Trump in early 2017, disagreed with this mindset, though his rebuttal seemed lacking.

"I agree with the adjectives that have been used by other people [to describe what happened]. It's a travesty. I go back and forth between thinking, do you call it a sham or do you call it a shame? It's probably both of those things," he said.

"John Bolton is going to testify in a way, but it won't be under oath and it won't be in the Senate. He's going to testify in a manner of speaking night after night on television and on the radio and on the radio and in editorial pages for weeks and weeks and weeks."

If former National Security Adviser John Bolton is going to "testify" publicly regardless of what happens in the trial, then why is forcing him to testify in the trial necessary? Especially when you factor in that the president was [slated to be acquitted](#) no matter what?

Bharara then turned his attention to Santorum.

"And the fact that the former senator there on your panel says there's a technical argument that the Senate trial was based on, even without witnesses and documents, the limited record that was provided to the House, that's not ...," he said before being cut off.

"That is not what I'm saying!" Santorum said. "Just to be very clear, because everybody is misrepresenting what I'm saying. I'm not talking about the record. I'm talking about the articles of impeachment themselves. Not the witnesses, not the record."

"The actual allegations made against the president in article 1 and article 2 are, of themselves, insufficient to remove a president. That's what Republicans are saying. You can argue all you want about witnesses, you can argue about documents, the point that's being made is ... still not guilty."

Fact-check: TRUE.

Liberal legal scholar Jonathan Turley, a CBS News legal analyst and George Washington University law professor, has maintained the [exact same point](#).

"The problem I have is that judging by how they define these two articles, you could impeach every living president on this type of allegations," he argued last month on CBS News.

While he's criticized both articles of impeachment, he's been especially critical of the "obstruction of justice" charge.

"The most troubling for me is the obstruction of Congress," he continued last month on CBS. "They set an abbreviated period for investigation, arguably the shortest investigation of any presidential impeachment, depending on how you count the Johnson impeachment days."

"And then they said if you don't turn over the evidence during that period, you're obstructing Congress. Well, President Trump went to court to challenge the necessity of handing over that material. Both Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon were allowed to go all the way to the Supreme Court—they ultimately lost, and Nixon resigned soon after. My concern is that this really does seem like you are making an appeal to the court into a high crime or a misdemeanor."

Listen:

Nevertheless, Bharara persisted Friday with his claim that Bolton's testimony would have somehow affected the outcome of the president's trial.

"People understand when you have a person like John Bolton who is close to the president, after the president's lawyers were saying week after week after week that you have no evidence of someone who has firsthand knowledge, and this person has firsthand knowledge and is prepared to testify, the public is going to perceive that as a sham. And I think that they will," he said.

"There is a reason why I think there is a debate in the Senate right now about how much deliberation there should be, because senators who understand that it's a sham, and that common sense renders it a sham, don't want to spend a lot of time on this and have to explain. Some people do want to explain because they have constituencies who ask them the question, you have a guy who has firsthand knowledge who undermines the chief defense of the president of the United States. Why don't you let him testify?"

Unfortunately, host Wolf Blitzer chose to block Santorum from replying by interrupting the discussion and drawing viewers' attention to what was happening in the Senate at the time.

Had the senator been allowed to reply, he may have perhaps chosen to quote the words of Rick Manning, the president of Americans for Limited Government.

In a statement released earlier in the week, he explained why he believes anything Bolton has to say is irrelevant.

"No matter what [he] claims, the facts remain the same," he [said](#). "The Ukrainian government had zero knowledge that the funds were being held until a story ran on August 28."

"Senator Ron Johnson, who was meeting with the Ukrainians on September 1 along with Vice President Pence, called President Trump about what they should ask for in exchange for the aid being released, to which the President replied, 'No way. I would never do that. Who told you that?' And, that he would likely be happy with the decision that was made: 'We're reviewing it now, and you'll probably like my final decision.'"

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Date:	2020/02/04 11:00:05
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Type:	Note



6

Feb. 4, 2020

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Secured border will be highlighted by in State of the Union by President Trump

Because President Trump made immigration enforcement a signature issue of his campaign, State of the Union viewers can expect to hear more from him on the subject. The President will highlight success in securing the southern border and progress on building the wall, and make proposals to limit chain migration, a more robust effort to remove those who overstay their visas, and changing immigration policies to favor immigrants who are most likely to strengthen our economy. Speaking English will improve an immigrant's chances of citizenship while those who are most likely to join the welfare rolls should expect to be denied. At the end of three years in office, President Trump has much to be proud of, including his determined efforts to secure the border. One can only imagine what he might be able to accomplish on the border with another four years.

Cartoon: Bernie Job Program

Hammer-ready jobs?

Restricting Short-Term Loans in Virginia Will Hurt Consumers

The Virginia legislature is rushing to pass a bill that would have disastrous consequences for Old Dominion residents. In the coming weeks, a law that would cap at 36 percent the interest rate on short-term loans up to \$2,500 and impose other limits on lenders will be voted on in the General Assembly after the bill passed through committee. In contrast to this hastily assembled bill, the current small-dollar lending regulations were carefully crafted by lawmakers, in consultation with stakeholders representing consumers and lenders, to balance access to credit while preserving critical consumer protections. Americans aren't stupid. They understand the risks involved when taking out small-dollar loans. Shrinking or eliminating the small-dollar-loan market will only serve to hurt those who find themselves in difficult circumstances. For this reason, lawmakers should make sure this bill never makes it to the governor's desk.

Iowa Caucus chaos incompetence, or manipulation?

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "The same Democrats who want to run our nation's health care system cannot manage to even count a few votes in Iowa. It is clear that the Iowa Democratic Party either is beyond incompetent or is corruptly attempting to put their thumbs on the scale to deny Bernie Sanders momentum and prop up the failing Joe Biden campaign. The real tragedy is that the Iowa Caucus is likely to become a thing of the past due this recent history of manipulating and misreporting. The shame of it is national candidates benefit from meeting farmers and spending time in middle America and Democratic candidates particularly benefit as they get off their coasts and visit what they view as flyover America once every four years. The big winner of the Iowa Caucus was not Bernie Sanders, it was President Donald Trump who has demonstrated the past three years that he can lead this nation to prosperity and restore our standing around the world, while his Democratic opponents cannot even be trusted to perform a simple task with telephone technology."

Joe Grogan: Every American child should have a choice when it comes to school

"The foundation to achieve the American Dream is anchored in hard work, perseverance and, most importantly, a quality education. Every child in America that has a meaningful chance to learn, can unlock the gateway to success. America's antiquated approach to education is failing our country's youth, and Washington is crippling our ability to provide a world-class education to every American child.

When we fail to set America's children up for success, we fail as a nation. Many incredible public and private schools are preparing students to succeed. Most kids have the potential to access an education that will allow them to pursue remarkable success. But, far too many kids, especially in our nation's poorest cities, are not allowed to capitalize on that opportunity. We must remain committed to revitalizing the American dream, and that means revitalizing our broken education system. Too many of our children are assigned by the government to schools that simply don't work for them and their parents don't have the economic means to do anything about it. They're stuck with no real options and often become just another statistic. Zip codes and invisible lines drawn by government bureaucrats are constraining the success of our children... The truth is that families who can afford private school tuition or who have the means to move out of a bad school zone already have education freedom. All American families need that freedom. States across the country are empowering families to enhance their child's education. Americans should rally behind President Trump's plan to ensure that every child has a chance to achieve the American Dream."

Secured border will be highlighted by in State of the Union by President Trump



6

By Richard McCarty

Because President Trump made immigration enforcement a signature issue of his campaign, State of the Union viewers can expect to hear more from him on the subject. The President will highlight success in securing the southern border and progress on [building the wall](#), and make proposals to limit chain migration, a more robust effort to remove those who overstay their visas, and changing immigration policies to favor immigrants who are most likely to strengthen our economy. Speaking English will improve an immigrant's chances of citizenship while those who are most likely to join the welfare rolls should expect to be denied.

Interestingly, Trump has been talking about best practices for handling immigration with various world leaders, and perhaps he will share some of what he has been hearing. But before we hear the President's speech, a look back at his immigration enforcement record is appropriate.

In December of 2019 (the most recent month for which we have numbers), [fewer than 41,000 people were apprehended or turned away at the border](#); this is 20,000 fewer than were apprehended or turned away in December of the previous year, and 75 percent down from the migrant car peak in May.

Trump's Remain in Mexico policy, which took effect last January, has also been a huge success. For years, asylum seekers gamed our system. After being given a court date to see an immigration judge, they would simply disappear into the country and never show up for court. Under the Remain in Mexico policy, some asylum seekers must wait in Mexico until their case is heard. This policy, too, has been fought in the courts, but, so far, Trump has prevailed.

Last month, it was reported that the Trump administration had [built 100 miles of wall](#) consisting of steel-bollard fencing 18-30 feet tall, but that is just the beginning. Along with the wall, the Administration is installing lighting, cameras, and motion sensors, and building patrol roads. Hundreds more miles of wall are expected to be built by the end of this year. About \$12 billion has so far been allocated for wall construction.

The liberal media likes to point out that much of the wall built so far is "replacement" wall. However, what the liberal media does not like to mention is that the old wall that is being replaced is often dilapidated and not very effective — or it was merely a vehicle barrier and not at all difficult for a person on foot to get over or under. So, in effect, the "replacement" wall is new wall because the old wall was nearly useless.

Were it not for Congressional obstruction and frivolous lawsuits, much more of the wall would be built by now. It is truly unfortunate that so many Members of Congress have so little interest in securing our border; and voters should keep that in mind as they go to the polls. Of course, Congressional opponents of the wall had accomplices in their fight. Seeking to halt — or at least slow — construction of the wall, pesky liberal groups like the Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club, and the ACLU all filed lawsuits. At times, these groups found robed Resisters willing to block the wall; but, in the end, their frivolous lawsuits were brushed aside.

Even setting aside the wall, the Trump administration is racking up quite a list of achievements. The number of illegal immigrants removed by Immigration and

Customs Enforcement has increased each year for the past three years. In FY 2019, more than 260,000 illegal immigrants were removed from the country. Under Trump, ICE has significantly increased its enforcement actions against companies that employ illegal immigrants. After a spike in border apprehensions last year, the numbers have continued falling, all good news.

At the end of three years in office, President Trump has much to be proud of, including his determined efforts to secure the border. One can only imagine what he might be able to accomplish on the border with another four years.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Bernie Job Program

By A.F. Branco



[6](#)

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Restricting Short-Term Loans in Virginia Will Hurt Consumers



[6](#)

By Rick Manning

The Virginia legislature is rushing to pass a bill that would have disastrous consequences for Old Dominion residents.

In the coming weeks, a law that would cap at 36 percent the interest rate on short-term loans up to \$2,500 and impose other limits on lenders will be voted on in the General Assembly after the bill passed through committee.

Rep. Terry Kilgore [argues](#) the potential adverse impacts of the bill are not being thoroughly considered. “We have no statute to cover somebody offshore. [The bill is] going to drive a lot of people to the internet and offshore lending,” he said.

In contrast to this hastily assembled bill, the current small-dollar lending regulations were carefully crafted by lawmakers, in consultation with stakeholders representing consumers and lenders, to balance access to credit while preserving critical consumer protections.

The new bill would undo these regulations in favor of measures restricting Virginians' consumer choice, forcing those who need cash to turn to unregulated sources.

People in need of cash to pay bills or cover unexpected expenses like car repairs will not disappear after this law is passed. Virginians will instead [turn](#) to unregulated lenders, pawnshops and lenders who are uncompetitive in Virginia, but who will offer loans if the state drives their competition out of business.

Several out-of-state lenders publicly [support](#) the bill and promise to provide loans in Virginia if the bill passes. There is no guarantee these businesses, who have no track record of serving Virginia consumers, will be reliable lenders. Additionally, most of these companies have strict standards that would exclude many of those who use short-term loans.

What's more, if these outside corporations offered a better deal for Virginia consumers, they would already be winning the business of consumers due to their superior, lower-cost product.

The simple truth is that the legal, regulated short-term loan business met needs that traditional banking establishments failed to meet. In fact, the usurious fees for account overdrafts contribute greatly to the de-banking of our nation's least affluent consumers.

Before hastily enacting a rate cap, the Virginia legislature needs to consider what has happened in other states that passed similar bills.

After the Ohio legislature, for example, passed a similar bill, [over](#) 100 lenders went of business and Ohioans found different ways to obtain cash [through](#) pawnshops, second mortgages and unregulated lenders.

Professor Stefanie Ramirez analyzes Ohio restrictions on short-term lenders [writing](#), “Policymakers may have simply shifted operating firms from one industry to another, having no real effect on market conduct.”

This bill does not protect consumers; it forces them to use less preferred and riskier options to obtain cash. This bill will not change the reality that Americans are often strapped for cash and need a loan in a pinch.

Take for example, the fact that one in 10 Americans, according to conservative [estimates](#), would be unable to afford a \$400 emergency expense, according to a recent [report](#) from the Federal Reserve.

More importantly, this same group of people wouldn’t even be able to charge a \$400 surprise bill to a credit card. “Twelve percent of adults would be unable to pay the expense by any means,” [reads](#) the report.

That leaves a significant percentage of Americans in a precarious financial situation, which current, regulated short-term lenders meet. If small-dollar lenders are forced out of the marketplace, or if large financial-service companies are allowed carve-outs and permitted to monopolize the industry, these same Americans will be forced to seek out riskier, black-market kinds of short-term loans.

As Diego Zuluaga, a policy analyst at the Cato Institute, [says](#), “Low usury caps were once widespread across American credit markets. But Progressive reformers in the early 1900s recognized that these caps harmed low-income people by throwing them into the hands of loan sharks. Gradually, they persuaded legislators to lift or remove interest caps, helping the formal market for small-dollar credit to flourish.”

It’s important to learn from the mistakes of past legislators, not repeat the same mistakes. That, however, is exactly what this bill would do if Virginia lawmakers decide to move forward with it—a move that would only serve to eliminate the few safe options low-income households have to make ends meet when unexpected bills hit.

Even the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce agrees with the notion small-dollar-loan caps hurt Americans. The chamber fought back when in 2016 the Consumer

Financial Protection Bureau proposed a rule change that capped interest rates on small-dollar loans.

As the chamber said in a [statement](#) back then, “The CFPB’s rule would harm the millions of consumers who use payday loans responsibly to manage unexpected and periodic financial difficulties.”

Despite the rhetoric, the Virginia Bureau of Financial Institutions annual report shows the regulations passed in 2009 are working. Instead of proposing changes to Virginia’s current payday lending laws that could put the entire industry out of business, legislators should re-direct their attention to focus on unregulated credit products.

Americans aren’t stupid. They understand the risks involved when taking out small-dollar loans. Shrinking or eliminating the small-dollar-loan market will only serve to hurt those who find themselves in difficult circumstances. For this reason, lawmakers should make sure this bill never makes it to the governor’s desk.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.



algpessreleases.PNG

Iowa Caucus chaos incompetence, or manipulation?

Feb. 4, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement on the Iowa Democratic Party’s failure to report results from the Iowa Caucus:

“The same Democrats who want to run our nation’s health care system cannot manage to even count a few votes in Iowa. It is clear that the Iowa Democratic Party either is beyond incompetent or is corruptly attempting to put their thumbs on

the scale to deny Bernie Sanders momentum and prop up the failing Joe Biden campaign. The real tragedy is that the Iowa Caucus is likely to become a thing of the past due this recent history of manipulating and misreporting. The shame of it is national candidates benefit from meeting farmers and spending time in middle America and Democratic candidates particularly benefit as they get off their coasts and visit what they view as flyover America once every four years.

"The big winner of the Iowa Caucus was not Bernie Sanders, it was President Donald Trump who has demonstrated the past three years that he can lead this nation to prosperity and restore our standing around the world, while his Democratic opponents cannot even be trusted to perform a simple task with telephone technology."

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ALG Editor's Note: [In the following featured oped from Foxnews.com](#), White House Policy Director Joe Grogan makes the case for school choice:



foxnews_thumb.PNG

Every American child should have a choice when it comes to school

By Joe Grogan

The foundation to achieve the American Dream is anchored in hard work, perseverance and, most importantly, a quality education. Every child in America that has a meaningful chance to learn, can unlock the gateway to success.

America's antiquated approach to education is failing our country's youth, and Washington is crippling our ability to provide a world-class education to every American child. When we fail to set America's children up for success, we fail as a nation.

Many incredible public and private schools are preparing students to succeed. Most kids have the potential to access an education that will allow them to pursue remarkable success. But, far too many kids, especially in our nation's poorest cities, are not allowed to capitalize on that opportunity. We must remain committed to revitalizing the American dream, and that means revitalizing our broken education system.

Too many of our children are assigned by the government to schools that simply don't work for them and their parents don't have the economic means to do anything about it. They're stuck with no real options and often become just another statistic. Zip codes and invisible lines drawn by government bureaucrats are constraining the success of our children.

Advocates of this failed status quo are quick to highlight good graduation rates, but they ignore the fact that our students still continue to lag behind their peers worldwide. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) found that 28 countries outperformed U.S students in math and 17 outperformed U.S. students in reading.

The most recent "Nation's Report Card" found that two out of three students can't read as they should. And inner-city, low income, and minority children perform even worse. Nearly half of fourth-graders who qualify for free and reduced lunch are functionally illiterate.

Only about half of America's high school students took the ACT college entrance exam last year. Just a quarter of them are college-ready in multiple subjects.

The education establishment terrified of losing control to parents and students has ripped the American Dream away from forgotten families across the country, prolonging the cycles of poverty, crime and despair. The Trump administration continues to promote policies that provide low-income students and all students with the tools freedom necessary for long term economic security. Our policies can help end this devastating cycle and empower students to thrive and fulfill their American Dream.

Forty-three states have public and private school choice programs, which allow parents to decide how and where their children learn, regardless of school zones. Nearly 500,000 students are enrolled in private school choice programs, and more than 2.5 million students enrolled in public charter schools nationwide. Yet, more than one million students are on waitlists to attend public charter schools of their choice. In Pennsylvania, special interest groups motivated Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf to veto a bill that would have helped 50,000 waitlisted kids to pursue the education that was right for them.

The politically powerful should not deprive children of a great education, and no child in America should be on a waitlist for success. That is why President Trump has called on Congress to pass Education Freedom Scholarships. The bill currently before Congress is a federal tax credit that would provide families with more educational opportunities. The proposal will bolster state efforts by providing \$5 billion to state-based scholarship programs. The legislation would empower parents to send their kids to the desired public, private, religious, public charter, home, or magnet school that they feel best meets the needs of their children.

Families in states such as Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina and Wisconsin, which have school choice programs, will greatly benefit. Other states will also be encouraged to step forward and leave the failed status quo behind and put America's children first!

The truth is that families who can afford private school tuition or who have the means to move out of a bad school zone already have education freedom. All American families need that freedom. States across the country are empowering families to enhance their child's education. Americans should rally behind President Trump's plan to ensure that every child has a chance to achieve the American Dream.

[Permalink here.](#)

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Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



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Feb. 6, 2020

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Trump exonerated with full acquittal in the Senate, but will Democrats ever accept election outcome and move this country forward?

President Donald Trump is riding high after a triumphant State of the Union Address and full acquittal by the U.S. Senate in his impeachment trial, and with a great, booming economy, it is looking increasingly unlikely whoever the Democratic nominee is will be able to defeat President Trump in November. Trump's opponents can blame themselves as in many ways, Trump's durability is a phenomenon of his opponents' own making. The President has had to endure unending, sequential attempts either to prevent him from taking office or to promptly remove him once he did — only to emerge stronger each time. President Trump has prevailed against everything his opponents have thrown at him: Russiagate, Mueller, impeachment and so forth. Combine the President's stamina with the lowest peacetime unemployment in modern history, sustained economic growth, new trade deals with Canada, Mexico, China, Japan and South Korea, and new tax cuts and deregulation, which the President highlighted in his State of the

Union Address, and you have a solid recipe for reelection in 2020. This is a President who never gives up and will never surrender. He keeps winning, so why would 2020 be any different? The real question is: Will Democrats ever accept as legitimate the verdict of the American people if and when Trump wins again?

Video: Rick Manning joins DoveTV discussing Surprise Medical Billing

Congress needs to address the issue of surprise medical billing without resorting to price controls.

Video: With a lead in N.H. and a popular vote win in Iowa, is Bernie Sanders the frontrunner for the Dems?

After a disappointing fourth place finish in Iowa for former Vice President Joe Biden, the odds that Bernie Sanders will be the Democratic nominee in 2020 are rising dramatically.

Virginia Republicans: Don't Run, Fight!

There seems to be a lot of resignation, defeatism, and despair over the damage that Democrats are doing to the Commonwealth of Virginia – which is exactly what the Democrats want – but that is the wrong response. Now is not the time to retreat or surrender; it is time to counterattack. As scandal-plagued Democrats mindlessly check off liberal agenda items to pander to special interest groups, they are handing Republicans issue after issue with which to rout them at the next election. As appalling as the Democrat agenda is, it is hard not to grudgingly respect their determination to conquer solidly Republican states, such as Texas. Republicans need to do much more long-term strategizing and be just as determined and subversive as Democrats are. After the GOP sends the Democrats packing in Virginia, who says that we cannot also flip New York, Illinois, or Oregon with enough time and resources?

Romney's Trump envy disappoints Utah

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "Mitt Romney has proven that his venal nature and envy over President Trump's election has overcome any rational judgment when it comes to impeachment. Romney's vote to convict reveals much more about his lack of character than it does about President Trump. While this is not surprising, it is disappointing in that prior to the 17th Amendment, the legislature of the state of Utah would have been able to immediately remove him from representing their state."

**Trump exonerated with full acquittal in the Senate, but will
accept election outcome and move this country forward?**

Democrats ever



6

By Robert Romano

President Donald Trump is riding high after a triumphant State of the Union Address and full acquittal by the U.S. Senate in his impeachment trial, and with a great, booming economy, it is looking increasingly unlikely whoever the Democratic nominee is will be able to defeat President Trump in November.

Trump's opponents can blame themselves as in many ways. The President's durability is a phenomenon of his opponents' own making. The President has had to endure unending, sequential trials by fire since he was elected, attempts to either to prevent him from taking office or to promptly remove him once he did — only to emerge stronger each time.

In 2016, the Trump campaign was under [active intelligence agency and FBI investigation and surveillance](#) on false allegations the Trump and members of his campaign were Russian agents complicit in the hack of the Democratic National Committee by Russia and putting the emails onto Wikileaks.

This false rumor was used in a [failed attempt to overturn the Electoral College](#) in Dec. 2016.

It led to the [malicious targeting](#) of former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn by the FBI in Jan. 2017.

The investigation itself was used to force the [recusal](#) of former Attorney General Jeff Sessions in March 2017.

When former FBI Director James Comey was fired for [repeatedly lying](#) to President Trump about the extent of the investigation, it led directly to the appointment of Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

But even then, the Mueller [report](#) ended up exonerating President Trump and his campaign of being Russian agents, finding, “[T]he investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities,” and “the evidence does not establish that the President was involved in an underlying crime related to Russian election interference.”

On obstruction of justice, Mueller punted the question to the Justice Department and the Attorney General, [who found no crime](#): “the evidence developed during the Special Counsel’s investigation is not sufficient to establish that the President committed an obstruction-of-justice offense... without regard to... the constitutional considerations that surround the indictment and criminal prosecution of a sitting president.”

Meaning, even if the Justice Department could have prosecuted a sitting president — it can't, but assuming it could — the President would not have ever been charged in the Russiagate affair.

After that, it was immediately on to the next thing for the President's opponents, this time the failed impeachment falsely alleging the President criminally, temporarily held up military assistance to Ukraine to force Ukraine to launch an investigation into the Bidens.

Ultimately, Trump was acquitted, namely because 1) the conduct he was accused of was [not criminal in nature and therefore not impeachable](#) under the Constitution; 2) the military assistance was ultimately released before the end of the fiscal year and there was no quid pro quo and [only a presumption](#) that there was by one ambassador; and 3) Trump never told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to investigate the Bidens, he told Zelensky that Ukraine should [take a second look at the Burisma natural gas firm](#) for corruption because former Vice President Joe Biden had had the prosecutor who says he was looking at the company fired, prematurely ending the investigation.

There was no allegation that the Obama administration did not have the power to leverage the loans or the Bidens broke a law that Ukraine needed to investigate, only that the investigation into Burisma might have been cut short and may need to be further explored by Ukraine.

Moreover, if the question is the Bidens the government does have a compelling legal interest to ensure that Americans do not profit from Ukrainian oligarchs from the Yanukovich regime. Burisma was run by a Yanukovich energy minister who allegedly awarded natural gas exploration rights to himself.

Congress even passed a law, which the President must faithfully execute. [Under 22 U.S.C. Section 8904\(a\)](#): "The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall assist, on an expedited basis as appropriate, the Government of Ukraine to identify, secure, and recover assets linked to acts of corruption by Viktor Yanukovich, members of his family, or other former or current officials of the Government of Ukraine or their accomplices in any jurisdiction through appropriate programs, including the

Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Initiative of the Department of Justice.” Meaning, if Hunter Biden and other Americans who worked at Burisma were profiting off of Yanukovych era corruption, they could owe the money back in the least. Either way, it does not matter that Hunter Biden is politically connected to former Vice President Joe Biden. As Democrats remind us daily, no one is above the law.

Overall, impeachment was an effort doomed to fail from its inception, particularly owing to the fact that Republicans have a majority in the Senate — something the House should have taken into serious consideration before rushing to bring the charges without all the evidence or witnesses on the record they wanted. They botched their own prosecution by relying on uncalled mystery witnesses that the Senate was under no obligation to furnish. They should have litigated their subpoenas, but they were in a rush. Oh well.

Now, the matter is past us, too. The Senate has acquitted Trump of all charges. He’s not guilty.

In short, President Trump has prevailed against everything his opponents have thrown at him: Russiagate, Mueller, impeachment and so forth.

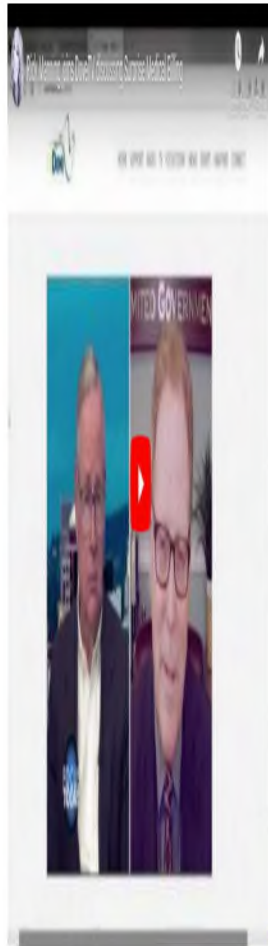
Combine the President’s stamina with the lowest peacetime unemployment in modern history, sustained economic growth, new trade deals with Canada, Mexico, China, Japan and South Korea, and new tax cuts and deregulation, which the President highlighted in his State of the Union Address, and you have a solid recipe for reelection in 2020.

This is a President who never gives up and will never surrender. He keeps winning, so why would 2020 be any different?

The real question is: Will Democrats ever accept as legitimate the verdict of the American people if and when Trump wins again?

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Video: Rick Manning joins DoveTV discussing Surprise Medical Billing

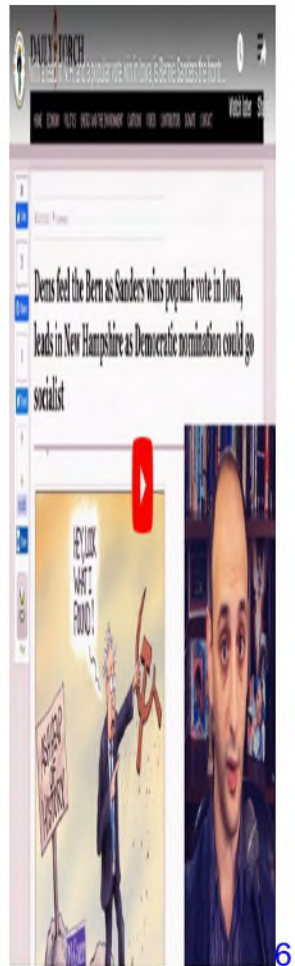


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To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4z7RITdE5Y>

Video: With a lead in N.H. and a popular vote win in Iowa, is the frontrunner for the Dems?

Bernie Sanders



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Virginia Republicans: Don't Run, Fight!



6

By Richard McCarty

There seems to be a lot of resignation, defeatism, and despair over the damage that Democrats are doing to the Commonwealth of Virginia – which is exactly what the Democrats want – but that is the wrong response. Now is not the time to retreat or surrender; it is time to counterattack. As scandal-plagued Democrats mindlessly check off liberal agenda items to pander to special interest groups, they are handing Republicans issue after issue with which to rout them at the next election.

Here is just some of the radical legislation that Virginia Democrats have proposed or advanced this year:

- a ban on “assault” weapons;
- a “red flag” law;

- • a bill allowing anti-gun localities to regulate guns;
- • a limit on gun purchases;
- • a repeal of informed consent for abortions, parental consent, and minimum health and safety standards for abortion facilities;
- • a gas tax hike and increased car registration fees;
- • a massive minimum wage hike;
- • a repeal of the Right to Work law;
- • a “Green New Deal” bill, which would lead to skyrocketing electricity bills;
- • a repeal of the voter ID law;
- • a bill allowing illegal aliens to get driver’s licenses; and
- • a mandate that boys be allowed to use girls’ restrooms and locker rooms.

As if their legislative agenda were not bad enough, Democrat politicians are also huge embarrassments to the Commonwealth. For starters, Gov. Ralph Northam (D) admitted to wearing blackface but claims not to know why he had the nickname “Coonman” in college or how a photo of someone wearing a Klan outfit and another person in blackface wound up on his page in his medical school yearbook. State Sen. Joe Morrissey (D) is a disbarred attorney, who fathered a child with his 17-year-old secretary and served time in jail; unbelievably, Democrats have appointed him to the Judiciary Committee. Del. Ibraheem Samirah (D) is such an anti-Semite that he posted on social media that he thought it was “worse” to give money to Israel than to the KKK; he also has ties to [Hamas](#), a terrorist organization. Del.

Chris Hurst (D) was just caught drinking and driving, but escaped arrest due to his office. Del. Dawn Adams (D) was sued by a former staffer who alleged that the delegate required her to do private sector work without additional pay and that the delegate hacked her email account to hide the evidence. Finally, Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax (D) has been credibly accused by two women of forcible rape, and not a single Democrat – including Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D), the first female House Speaker – lifted a finger to investigate or impeach Fairfax.

To be sure, many conservatives across the Commonwealth are ready to fight. We have seen that in the massive turnout at many local government meetings where constituents have demanded their officials declare their areas Second Amendment sanctuaries. Those who may be feeling depressed at the current state of affairs in Virginia should take heart from these gun rights activists.

There are no permanent majorities, and Virginia Democrats do not have anything close to huge legislative majorities. Just flipping eight seats, puts them right back where they so richly deserve to be -- in the minority. So we should spend less time thinking about how we can split up the Commonwealth, or join another state, or move to a more Republican state; and we should spend more time thinking about how we can recruit more volunteers, appeal to more voters, raise more money, and recruit and train more quality candidates to take our Commonwealth back.

As appalling as the Democrat agenda is, it is hard not to grudgingly respect their determination to conquer solidly Republican states, such as Texas. Republicans need to do much more long-term strategizing and be just as determined and subversive as Democrats are. After we send the Democrats packing in Virginia, who says that we cannot also flip New York, Illinois, or Oregon with enough time and resources?

Virginia Democrats think that they can just buy a narrow legislative majority and turn a moderate, family-friendly, and business-friendly state, overnight, into a cesspool like California. They also think that there is nothing we can do about it. Let's teach these arrogant Democrats a lesson they will not soon forget. Instead of looking for somewhere to flee from these radicals, we should be working to retake the Commonwealth. Virginia's worth fighting for. Who's with me?

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research at Americans for Limited Government.



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Romney's Trump envy disappoints Utah

Feb. 5, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement blasting Sen. Mitt Romney (R-Utah) for [announcing](#) he would vote to convict President Donald Trump:

"Mitt Romney has proven that his venal nature and envy over President Trump's election has overcome any rational judgment when it comes to impeachment. Romney's vote to convict reveals much more about his lack of character than it does about President Trump. While this is not surprising, it is disappointing in that prior to the 17th Amendment, the legislature of the state of Utah would have been able to immediately remove him from representing their state."

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Type:	Note



6

March 19, 2020

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Will Trump get a rally around the flag effect by fighting Chinese coronavirus? Ask seniors.

President Donald Trump, the federal and state governments are leading an unprecedented nationwide response to the Chinese coronavirus outbreak, shutting down vast portions of the U.S. economy, closing schools and government offices, all to save the lives of seniors and those with underlying conditions who are the most endangered by the virus. More than 52 million Americans are aged 65-years-old-and-older. Of those, 21 million are 75-years-old-and-older, and 12.6 million are 80-years-old-and-older. The fatality rates reported out of South Korea suggest a 4 percent fatality rate for those 65-years-old-and-older infected with the coronavirus, versus about 0.9 percent fatality rate for the seasonal flu. The fatality rate rises to 15 percent for those 80-years-old-and-older. If everyone got sick, that suggests more than 2 million might perish as hospitals, doctors and nurses were suddenly overwhelmed. To prevent that, tens of millions Americans are uniting and mobilizing for one purpose in order to save the lives of as many as possible and

to salvage as much of the economy as can be from the fallout. Sometimes, such a prolonged crisis politically can result in a rally around the flag effect for the incumbent. The idea is that in a time of national crisis, the American people will rally to the President regardless of party. The overall political outcome will likely depend on how seniors respond to the crisis. All these sacrifices are being made to protect the most vulnerable, and so do they feel protected? For Trump's war on the virus to be victorious, he needs older Americans to fully opt in. Do you support the President's plan to save the lives of potentially millions of older Americans?

Video: When the coronavirus ends, everyone needs to get back to work or we'll have a deep, long recession

If the government provides enough of an incentive for people to stay home, millions Americans will respond by ceasing labor participation. And if too many give into this mindset, when the pandemic is over it has the potential to utterly devastate the U.S. economy, with reverberations felt for a generation just like the financial crisis. Back then, Congress kept on readily extending unemployment benefits for up to 99 weeks. Remember? Do we want to do that again? That is why as soon as the virus passes, the unemployment assistance should automatically transform into a rehiring tax credit for employers to quickly get back up and running. For essentially the same price as the unemployment assistance being dispensed, the government could provide tax credits to businesses to bring back and rehire everyone they put on unpaid sick leave at the beginning of the shutdown. In principle, that would shorten the duration of expanded government assistance, hopefully saving taxpayers billions and ensure that when this over, the nation can get back on its feet as quickly as possible.

President Trump praised for nomination of Russ Vought to head OMB

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "President Trump got it exactly right by nominating Russ Vought to become the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Vought has proven himself to be an outstanding steward of the OMB during Director Mick Mulvaney's stints as head of the Consumer Finance Protection Board and White House Chief of Staff. Our nation faces a perilous time with previously unseen levels of emergency spending to meet the Chinese virus crisis and its impacts on the economy. Vought understands where this money is going and will help the President ensure that it is properly spent. What's more, there is no better person to prepare the way out of the economic disaster left in the wake of the Chinese virus, which has shuttered many American businesses in an attempt to

contain it. With Vought at the helm, America can be sure that a plan to achieve fiscal sanity will be in place when the threat subsides. I am also heartened by the fact that the lesser known part of the OMB's functions, reviewing regulations, will continue under Vought's steady hand. To meet the Chinese virus challenge and come out the other end with a restored and robust economic rebound requires someone who truly understands the connection between the federal regulatory regime and economic growth. In short, the President could not have appointed someone more qualified to meet our nation's fiscal and regulatory challenges than Russ Vought."

Letter: Conservative groups urge no government rate setting for out-of-network visits

"As you debate and consider a legislative response for those affected by COVID-19, the undersigned groups representing millions of taxpayers and consumers urge you to reject any attempt to include any language that would seek to address surprise medical billing by creating a government-mandated benchmark (i.e. rate-setting) to determine out-of-network rates for physicians. Government price controls for medical bills would be particularly devastating at a time of great stress for our nation's patients and healthcare providers. Doctors and hospitals are on the front line of treating and fighting this disease. Mandating in-network rates would result in direct government price controls that would artificially suppress rates for providers offering out-of-network care, resulting in enormous financial losses that would be shifted to local hospitals and emergency rooms."

Will Trump get a rally around the flag effect by fighting Chinese coronavirus? Ask seniors.



[6](#)

By Robert Romano

President Donald Trump, the federal and state governments are leading an unprecedented nationwide response to the Chinese coronavirus outbreak, shutting down vast portions of the U.S. economy, closing schools and government offices, all to save the lives of seniors and those with underlying conditions who are the most endangered by the virus.

More than [52 million Americans](#) are aged 65-years-old-and-older. Of those, 21 million are 75-years-old-and-older, and 12.6 million are 80-years-old-and-older.

The fatality rates reported out of South Korea suggest a [4 percent fatality rate](#) for those 65-years-old-and-older infected with the coronavirus, versus about [0.9 percent](#) fatality rate for the seasonal flu. The fatality rate rises to 15 percent for those 80-years-old-and-older.

If everyone got sick, that suggests more than 2 million might perish as hospitals, doctors and nurses were suddenly overwhelmed. A national catastrophe. But a preventable one if we stay away from one another.

To avert the worst case scenario, the government is sacrificing the economy and most probably causing a major recession while tens of millions of Americans are being temporarily furloughed and placed on paid and unpaid sick and family medical leave. A national emergency has been called, and the President is invoking several provisions of federal statute to suspend regulations to get a vaccine developed and testing across the country, build hospitals and manufacture needed medical supplies. International travel has been mostly suspended.

It is a nationwide mobilization akin to wartime, necessitating tens of millions of Americans to unite for one purpose in order to save the lives of as many as possible and to salvage as much of the economy as can be from the fallout.

Sometimes, such a prolonged crisis politically can result in a [rally around the flag effect](#) for the incumbent. This was the case for Franklin Roosevelt with the Great Depression and World War II, and George W. Bush following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

The idea is that in a time of national crisis, the American people will rally to the President regardless of party. The cases mentioned, the Great Depression and World War II, truly were national efforts where Americans united with common cause to rebuild the nation shattered by deep economic recession and monetary deflation, and then to defeat fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and imperial Japan.

Arguably, Lyndon Johnson in 1964 had a similar effect following the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963, as did George H.W. Bush following the Persian Gulf War in 1991, albeit short-lived as he went on to lose his reelection bid in 1992 to Bill Clinton.

Conversely, Herbert Hoover in 1932 with the Great Depression, Jimmy Carter in 1980 with the Iran hostage crisis and the aforementioned elder Bush in 1992 with a recession show presidents who didn't make the cut when it came to addressing a national crisis when they faced voters for a second time.

This is why we elect presidents, to deal with crises. Some succeed, and others fail.

So, which will happen for Trump? Certainly, he gets credit for trying, taking unprecedented emergency actions to contain a deadly virus, and one can argue that the nation has already rallied to the cause, working together across party lines. Governors [Andrew Cuomo](#) (D-N.Y.) and [Gavin Newsom](#) (D-Calif.) have praised the administration's response to provide assistance to New York, California and other states hit hard by the virus.

But the overall political outcome will likely depend on how successful the coronavirus public policy response is at convincing Americans to engage in social distancing, thereby reducing the number of cases and saving lives. And on how well the government deals with the certain economic fallout of millions of Americans being temporarily out of work.

And, perhaps most importantly, on how seniors respond to the crisis. All these sacrifices are being made to protect the most vulnerable, and so do they feel protected? For Trump's war on the virus to be victorious, he needs older Americans to fully opt in.

Early indicators in Florida — which has [among the highest percentage populations of seniors](#) — show President Trump faring pretty well in match-ups against former Vice President Joe Biden. For example, [a March 6-12 Univision poll](#) shows Trump leading Florida 48 percent to 45 percent, and 51 percent to 44 percent among those older than 50.

53 percent [say](#) the government is doing enough to contain the virus, including 56 percent of those older than 50. That's about as well as Trump did nationally in 2016, when he beat Hillary Clinton among seniors in [the CNN exit poll](#) nationally and [in Florida](#). Watch for that number to rise significantly over the coming days and weeks once the de facto national lockdown is taken into account.

So, if Trump does experience a surge, particularly among older Americans across party lines most concerned about the virus and favoring his aggressive approach to containing it, it has the significant possibility of tilting the election in his favor come November. It is hard to imagine Trump winning without seniors.

Or it could be Trump wins the war against the virus, but the economy and the election are among the casualties.

Perhaps rationally we should all hope Trump is rewarded politically for acting so boldly. Next time, a virus might target children or young adults. In order for such a response to be replicated in the future, it must be sustainable politically.

If the President's efforts are in vain, the next time we have a crisis like this, the government might just let the vulnerable die out of economic and downstream political concerns. One thing the Trump administration can absolutely say is that it is prioritizing the lives of Americans, particularly seniors, over any political advantage or economic concerns.

The thing to watch in the coming days will be the number of new cases, now increasing as nationwide testing proliferates.

It's risky, particularly with the economic turmoil but that fallout may very well have been unavoidable whether the government proclaimed a shutdown or it didn't. Europe resisted a lockdown until the situation was untenable in Italy and it was forced on them. Likely businesses and states would have shut down either way even if Trump had preferred a *laissez faire* approach. Trump chose early on to get ahead of the curve, sealed the border with China and has been ramping up every since.

The question now is will Trump's approach, including by banning overseas travel and encouraging businesses and schools to close, help to bend that curve downward? If it does, when the number of new cases are dropping, Trump will be able to campaign in November on having saved the lives of potentially millions of seniors, who may thank him by reelecting him President.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Video: When the coronavirus ends, everyone needs to get back to work or we'll have a deep, long recession



To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JcY1iu8mug>



algpessreleases.PNG

President Trump praised for nomination of Russ Vought to head OMB

March 18, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement praising President Donald Trump’s nomination to head the White House Office of Management and Budget, Russ Vought:

“President Trump got it exactly right by nominating Russ Vought to become the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Vought has proven himself to be an outstanding steward of the OMB during Director Mick Mulvaney’s stints as head of the Consumer Finance Protection Board and White House Chief of Staff.

“Our nation faces a perilous time with previously unseen levels of emergency spending to meet the Chinese virus crisis and its impacts on the economy.

Vought understands where this money is going and will help the President ensure that it is properly spent. What’s more, there is no better person to prepare the way out of the economic disaster left in the wake of the Chinese virus, which has shuttered many American businesses in an attempt to contain it.

With Vought at the helm, America can be sure that a plan to achieve fiscal sanity will be in place when the threat subsides.

“I am also heartened by the fact that the lesser known part of the OMB’s functions, reviewing regulations, will continue under Vought’s steady hand. To meet the Chinese virus challenge and come out the other end with a restored and robust economic rebound requires someone who truly understands the connection

between the federal regulatory regime and economic growth. In short, the President could not have appointed someone more qualified to meet our nation’s fiscal and regulatory challenges than Russ Vought.”

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Letter: Conservative groups urge no government rate setting for out-of-network visits

As you debate and consider a legislative response for those affected by COVID-19, the undersigned groups representing millions of taxpayers and consumers urge you to reject any attempt to include any language that would seek to address surprise medical billing by creating a government-mandated benchmark (i.e. rate-setting) to determine out-of-network rates for physicians. Government price controls for medical bills would be particularly devastating at a time of great stress for our nation's patients and healthcare providers.

Doctors and hospitals are on the front line of treating and fighting this disease. Mandating in-network rates would result in direct government price controls that would artificially suppress rates for providers offering out-of-network care, resulting in enormous financial losses that would be shifted to local hospitals and emergency rooms.

Many of these facilities — particularly the ones serving rural, hard-to-reach communities across the nation — are already operating under razor-thin profit margins, if they are even profitable at all. Further compounding their financial woes could exacerbate a growing doctor shortage and lead to an increase in rural provider consolidation or even closure. The net result of any of these outcomes would be fewer options and higher costs for already at-risk patients.

Lawmakers in California enacted a flawed approach called “benchmarking” In 2017 and patients across the state are suffering from the consequences.

Benchmarking at the federal level would give the government authority to set arbitrarily low rates for physicians providing out-of-network care by tying payments to insurers' deeply discounted in-network averages. This harmful rate-setting approach is included in legislation advanced by the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee, the House Energy & Commerce Committee, and the House Education & Labor Committee.

It is critical that at a time of a national emergency you focus on the needs of the country and not use the pandemic as an opportunity to enact government rate-setting that would harm our patients and our healthcare system.

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Date:	2020/03/23 07:02:17
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

For Immediate Release

Contact: Robert Romano

March 23, 2020

Phone: 703-383-0880 ext. 1

Senate Democrats must quit playing politics and get serious to protect 30 million small businesses

March 23, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement in response to the [failed vote](#) in the Senate to provide relief to the U.S. economy including 30 million small businesses in the unprecedented economic shutdown response to the Chinese coronavirus outbreak:

"It is abhorrent that Senate Democrats are attempting to hold our nation's economy and 30 million small businesses hostage in their neverending quest to turn crisis into political opportunity.

"The magnitude of the health emergency and the proposed Senate response emphasize how serious Senate Republicans are taking this crisis. No Republican was

elected to spend trillions of dollars to revive an economy deliberately shut down to save a million American lives, and yet they have stood up and done what they believe is necessary to ensure Americans can get by while they wait in their homes for the virus to pass. We continue to believe that all spending should be targeted to the specific needs created by the emergency, and any attempt to make permanent spending increases should be rejected.

"What's more, any attempts to fundamentally change our nation's health care system including the creation of any one size fits all medical billing system that lays the groundwork for socialized medicine should be rejected. These rate setting proposals fundamentally change the ability for the very heroes in the health provider community to be paid a fair price for their labor and it would be a punch in their guts to enact legislation now that punishes them while they are working tirelessly to save American lives.

"While Americans for Limited Government is uncomfortable with the amount of spending authorized, and the changes to the unemployment laws that dramatically expand the program having the likely unintended impact of encouraging businesses to lay off employees, rather than fight through the crisis, it remains important Congress come together. Democrats must stop their putting politics ahead of the lives and livelihoods of the American people.

"America is the greatest country in the history of mankind. We will survive this national challenge, and by passing legislation providing a safety net to allow the small business foundation of our economy to hit the ground running once we're past this crisis, we will come back rapidly and stronger than ever."

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Attachments:

"Trump virus response calls for covering payroll for every small business in America with \$300 billion," By Robert Romano, March 20, 2020 at <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=9b72260d-c7260f26-9b721732-0cc47a6d17cc->

c37b5fa4704ebabc&u=http://dailytorch.com/2020/03/trump-virus-response-calls-for-covering-payroll-for-every-small-business-in-america-with-300-billion/

Interview Availability: Please contact Americans for Limited Government at 703-383-0880 ext. 1 or at media@limitgov.org.

###

Americans for Limited Government is dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by restoring constitutionally limited government, allowing individuals to pursue life, liberty and happiness. For more information on ALG please visit our website at <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=7fea0df1-23be24da-7fea3cce-0cc47a6d17cc-9e1437111ba389c3&u=http://www.getliberty.org/> and <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=9bc51b1f-c7913234-9bc52a20-0cc47a6d17cc-9045d916d6f049ca&u=http://www.dailytorch.com/>.

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Subject:	SEC proposal breaks Trump regulatory pledge
Date:	2020/03/23 10:34:59
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

March 23, 2020

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SEC proposal breaks Trump regulatory pledge, places risk burden on brokers, not investors

President Donald Trump has made ending overly paternalistic or downright economically damaging regulations one of the bulwarks of his administration with a success record second to none in rolling back the expanded administrative state. Yet, in spite of this administration emphasis, the Securities and Exchange Commission is considering an Obama era regulation which is so extreme that the former president's own SEC rejected moving forward with it. The regulation would deny independent investors access to currently available trading alternatives designed to allow them to hedge risks against market volatility unless they passed a test and were deemed qualified by a financial services provider.

Senate Dems hold economy hostage after demanding everything close to slow down Chinese coronavirus

Senate Democrats are holding the U.S. economy hostage after blocking

legislation to protect small businesses, guarantee payroll and expand unemployment relief to tens of millions of workers. The vote failed 47 to 47, with 60 needed to advance the bill. The fate of 30 million small businesses and critical industries, indeed, the U.S. economy hangs in the balance after the federal and state governments have practically closed everything except for essential services. The government has put the economy into an induced coma, and now it has a responsibility not to lose the patient. By forcing almost the entire population to stay home for all intents and purposes, the government must ensure the American people have an economy to go back to. Many of those businesses will never come back—unless Congress acts right now to protect them. Here is the truth. People are going to start running out of money very soon as cash reserves are depleted. Without revenues, every aspect of the economy will seize up. The only way to safely contain the virus is for Congress to incentivize the American people to stay home. Or else people and businesses will begin breaking the national lockdown out of desperation.

Senate Democrats must quit playing politics and get serious to protect 30 million small businesses

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: “While Americans for Limited Government is uncomfortable with the amount of spending authorized, and the changes to the unemployment laws that dramatically expand the program having the likely unintended impact of encouraging businesses to lay off employees, rather than fight through the crisis, it remains important Congress come together.

Democrats must stop their putting politics ahead of the lives and livelihoods of the American people. America is the greatest country in the history of mankind. We will survive this national challenge, and by passing legislation providing a safety net to allow the small business foundation of our economy to hit the ground running once we're past this crisis, we will come back rapidly and stronger than ever.”

SEC proposal breaks Trump regulatory pledge, places risk burden on brokers, not investors



By Rick Manning

President Donald Trump has made ending overly paternalistic or downright economically damaging regulations one of the bulwarks of his administration with a success record second to none in rolling back the expanded administrative state. Yet, in spite of this administration emphasis, the Securities and Exchange Commission is considering an Obama era regulation which is so extreme that the former president's own SEC rejected moving forward with it.

The regulation would deny independent investors access to currently available trading alternatives designed to allow them to hedge risks against market volatility unless they passed a test and were deemed qualified by a financial services provider.

At its core, the current regulatory proposal would impose unprecedented new burdens on investment advisors and brokers for publicly traded ETF's that allow investment in inverse and leveraged funds. These funds provide individual middle-class investors the same ability to hedge market conditions that bigger players have. These investment instruments, which have existed for use by investors for years, provide opportunities for investors to diversify their portfolios. Like all investments, there are risks involved and they are all rightfully disclosed to investors under current [Securities and Exchange Commission](#) rules.

Under the new regulation, the brokers and advisors are being given a novel responsibility — one they have never before had — of having to determine whether an investor is capable of understanding a publicly traded financial product before allowing that investor to purchase that product.

The net result is that the proposed SEC regulation would create a massive disincentive for these investment tools to be offered to individual investors, effectively denying even the most sophisticated person access to effective, proven methods of mitigating risk.

If the SEC truly believes that the transparency about the risks of these types of investments is unclear or too mild, then they should and can address the language of those disclosures. But to require brokers advisors to collect unprecedented information and decide whether a client is capable of making their own decision is a dangerous expansion of government authority that even the Obama SEC chose not to move on and would be an irresponsible and downright damaging to the overall market.

The end result is that many investment firms will no longer offer these types of investment options. This means that the private investor who will be effectively denied access to investment vehicles which are commonly used by institutional investors as a means of levelling out the risk of investments.

SEC Commissioners Hester M. Peirce and Elad Roisman made the point that should this regulation go into effect, these funds may be denied to middle-class investors in a comment on the regulation, writing about the test which the brokerage or advisory firms would have to administer to investors in order to determine if they should be allowed to utilize these funds,

“The release does not specify how we expect brokerage or advisory firms to assess investors’ answers to these questions. Yet, the proposed rules would direct them to make a “reasonable” determination as to whether the investor is suited for trading geared products. By providing so little information about the result we are aiming to achieve, we worry that such a requirement will either become a meaningless check-the-box exercise or a regulatory deterrent for brokers and advisers to offer these ETFs on their menus at all.”

In addition to the these commissioners, the proposal has been criticized by leading conservative experts and [organizations](#) as a dangerous expansion of government oversight of the investment industry that will needlessly harm investors and our economy.

This heads you lose, tails you lose likelihood will have the effect of brokerages washing their hands of even offering these investment options and denying middle-class investors access to the same tools as their more well-healed counterparts.

The SEC comment period for this proposed regulation ends on March 24, with the Commission making a determination of whether to move forward with this draconian rule a few months afterward. Rather than denying investors access to sophisticated investment options, the SEC would be well-served to address transparency requirements to ensure that all investors have the risks laid out clearly for them, so they can make adult decisions about their own portfolios. In the end, the essential component of stock market investing is that the investors should be free to make their own decisions and it would be a grievous mistake to upend this basic principle with potentially disastrous consequences resulting from the regulatory precedent.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.

Senate Dems hold economy hostage after demanding everything close to slow down Chinese coronavirus



6

By Robert Romano

Senate Democrats are holding the U.S. economy hostage after [blocking](#) legislation to protect small businesses, guarantee payroll and expand unemployment relief to tens of millions of workers.

The vote failed 47 to 47, with 60 needed to advance the bill.

The fate of 30 million small businesses and critical industries, indeed, the U.S. economy hangs in the balance after the federal and state governments have practically closed everything except for essential services.

The government has put the economy into an induced coma, and now it has a responsibility not to lose the patient.

By forcing almost the entire population to stay home for all intents and purposes, the government must ensure the American people have an economy to go back to. That's where small business relief comes in.

Small businesses employ 60 million workers nationwide and are the backbone of our economy, but right now they are in serious danger of disappearing. Without immediate relief by way of forgivable loans to meet payroll, there may be nothing left on the balance sheets when this is over except debt.

Many of those businesses will never come back—unless Congress acts right now to protect them.

Here is the truth.

People are going to start running out of money very soon as cash reserves are depleted. Without revenues, every aspect of the economy will seize up. Soon, it will become a vast financial crisis as people become rapidly unable to pay their debts. Then, banks.

Already, the Federal Reserve is [intervening](#) by purchasing commercial mortgage backed securities and has opened a new \$300 billion lending window to businesses and larger employers. Interest rates are back down to zero. And quantitative easing has begun anew.

The Senate bill would provide \$300 billion to cover payroll for small businesses and another \$200 billion for critical industries. By covering everyone's payroll, everyone will be able to continue paying their mortgages and utilities. Businesses will be able to cover building and maintenance expenses.

Debt markets won't seize up. The financial and digital portions of our economy will continue functioning. Vast uncertainty about the coronavirus outbreak will be alleviated.

These closures in response to a public health emergency are now themselves a financial emergency that must be addressed by Congress before it is too late.

We also need to salvage as much of the economy and businesses can be after the virus passes. After this is all over, we're going to need them to rebuild America in the aftermath.

The Senate and House must take responsibility for everything being closed and to stop putting politics above all of our lives. There is too much at stake.

The only way to safely contain the virus is for Congress to incentivize the American people to stay home. What Congress does affects the health emergency directly. It has to safely house every American for the next several weeks or months.

Or else people and businesses will begin breaking the national lockdown out of desperation.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.



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Senate Democrats must quit playing politics and get serious to protect 30 million small businesses

March 22, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement in response to the [failed vote](#) in the Senate to provide relief to the U.S. economy including 30 million small businesses in the unprecedented economic shutdown response to the Chinese coronavirus outbreak:

"It is abhorrent that Senate Democrats are attempting to hold our nation's economy and 30 million small businesses hostage in their neverending quest to turn crisis into political opportunity.

"The magnitude of the health emergency and the proposed Senate response emphasize how serious Senate Republicans are taking this crisis. No Republican was

elected to spend trillions of dollars to revive an economy deliberately shut down to save a million American lives, and yet they have stood up and done what they believe is necessary to ensure Americans can get by while they wait in their homes for the virus to pass. We continue to believe that all spending should be targeted to the specific needs created by the emergency, and any attempt to make permanent spending increases should be rejected.

"What's more, any attempts to fundamentally change our nation's health care system including the creation of any one size fits all medical billing system that lays the groundwork for socialized medicine should be rejected. These rate setting proposals fundamentally change the ability for the very heroes in the health provider community to be paid a fair price for their labor and it would be a punch in their guts to enact legislation now that punishes them while they are working tirelessly to save American lives.

"While Americans for Limited Government is uncomfortable with the amount of spending authorized, and the changes to the unemployment laws that dramatically expand the program having the likely unintended impact of encouraging businesses to lay off employees, rather than fight through the crisis, it remains important Congress come together. Democrats must stop their putting politics ahead of the lives and livelihoods of the American people.

"America is the greatest country in the history of mankind. We will survive this national challenge, and by passing legislation providing a safety net to allow the small business foundation of our economy to hit the ground running once we're past this crisis, we will come back rapidly and stronger than ever."

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Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note



6

March 27, 2020

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[President Trump should issue the Buy American executive order to end China's control of our medicines](#)

The Association for Accessible Medicines, a trade association for large pharmaceutical manufacturers is pushing a letter opposing an executive order proposed by President Donald Trump that would reduce or eliminate regulations that have raised the cost of manufacturing medical compounds and equipment in the United States. His goal is to end American dependence on China for the medicines we need. The big international corporations, of course, say the order will make it difficult for them to supply antibiotics and equipment needed now to fight the Chinese coronavirus. Their stated reason for opposing the President is that they want to "do their part" in fighting the scourge. But there is likely a far more sinister reason for this action. The Chinese Communists will do just about anything to keep their stranglehold on the supply of medicines, the components to make medicines and medical equipment, This is about power — the power of the

Chinese Communists to dictate terms to America and Europe. And they are delivering this message through the serpentine voices of major corporations.

Cartoon: Cabin Fever

Adam Schiff works from home.

How do conservative groups propose to solve surprise medical billing?

What is surprise medical billing, and what do conservative organizations think should be done to address this problem? Surprise medical billing occurs when a patient has a medical emergency and is taken to an out-of-network emergency room for treatment and then receives a large bill in the mail weeks or months later for care. Surprise medical billing also occurs when a patient goes to an in-network hospital but is treated by an out-of-network doctor who then sends an unexpected bill weeks or months after treatment. This problem was worsened by Obamacare, which led to narrower networks of health care providers — and more out-of-network providers. Conservative organizations oppose allowing the government or insurance companies to set rates for out-of-network providers, but they differ in the solutions they support.

Video: Will states reopen their schools and economy sooner or later? That will determine the extent of the recession.

The longer schools and much of the economy remain closed to deal with the outbreak, the longer the recession the government is creating will last and the higher unemployment will become.

Should New York City be quarantined?

55 percent of U.S. coronavirus cases are now in the state of New York, with an outbreak occurring in New York City, the most densely populated area and the largest city in the nation with more than 8 million. More than 21,000 cases are now reported in New York City, and more than 37,000 statewide. That's out of 68,000 nationwide. New York City has become the hotbed. Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo issued a stay at home order on March 20 for non-essential workers. Schools in the city have been closed since mid-March. But not everyone is listening, and now New York has the most cases. 58 percent of their cases in Queens and Brooklyn, where people are walking around, hanging out and socializing as if they were on vacation with colleges also closed. So, while the rest of the country has been sheltering in place and shut down for days and weeks, at least early on in the state

lockdown, many people in New York City are still openly ignoring governmental health recommendations. Is that why they're having problems now? And should anything be done to mitigate risks elsewhere?

President Trump should issue the Buy American executive order to end China's control of our medicines



[6](#)

By Bill Wilson

With all we are facing today, with all the fear and outright transformation of our entire society, it might seem odd that a group of medical organizations would sign a letter opposing American independence in the production of medicines and medical equipment. You would think that in the crisis these groups would want to see America move toward a strong, independent position. But you would be wrong.

The Association for Accessible Medicines (AAM), a trade association for large pharmaceutical manufacturers is pushing a [letter](#) opposing an executive order proposed by President Donald Trump that would reduce or eliminate regulations that have raised the cost of manufacturing medical compounds and equipment in the United States. His goal is to end American dependence on China for the medicines we need.

The big international corporations, of course, say the order will make it difficult for them to supply antibiotics and equipment needed now to fight the Chinese coronavirus. Their stated reason for opposing the President is that they want to “do their part” in fighting the scourge. But there is likely a far more sinister reason for this action.

The Chinese Communists will do just about anything to keep their stranglehold on the supply of medicines, the components to make medicines and medical equipment. This is about power — the power of the Chinese Communists to dictate terms to America and Europe. And they are delivering this message through the serpentine voices of major corporations.

So far, the letter being circulated by the pharmaceutical giants has 40 signatures, mostly from associations funded by the pharmaceutical firms themselves. In all fairness, most of these groups need the funding from the corporations so it is no surprise that they are doing as they are told. And, as would be expected, there are a handful of so-called “conservative” groups reciting their “free trade” mantra. They, sadly, are so blinded by their failed religion of globalism that they cannot see the threat to America their position holds.

In this small example at a time of national crisis, we can see two facts of life that we all must recognize and address. First, Lenin was right, the capitalist will sell the rope with which they will be hung. China barks and the largest drug companies in the world back down and crawl in their service. The lust for profits even at the price of

severe damage to the United States and the American people is the hallmark of major international corporations.

Secondly, the orthodoxy of open borders, open trade and global supply chains has shown itself to be toxic. Millions of working families knew this and have suffered from the actions of both political parties for decades. Tens of thousands of small communities and towns have known the lethal impact of this globalist religion for a long time, as their communities wither and die. But now everyone can see the impact. 95 percent of the components of the most widely used antibiotics are made in China. Medical equipment is now made in China. And, when we need them, we have to depend on the good will of a society that kills its own people, operates slave labor camps and practices genocide on a world class level.

The move by President Trump to begin to bring the production of medicine and medical equipment back to the United States is the only honorable and right thing that could be done. For those corporations now under the golden thumb of China to oppose this basic movement toward American sovereignty is tantamount to a renunciation of their U.S. citizenship. They now side with the rulers of a foreign, hostile regime over that of the people of the United States. Going forward, they should be treated as foreign agents, because that is what they are.

And for the groups who call themselves conservative and toe the globalist line, the sad truth is that none of them have had any impact for a very long time. They are the epitome of Conservative, Inc., existing merely to exist, not to achieve any goal that might conserve the best of America.

What we are viewing is a continuation of a war inside the Republican Party that is now 125 years old. In the election of 1896, William McKinley ran on the platform that had rebuilt America after the Civil War and turned the nation into the industrial powerhouse it was to be up to this day. The platform was simple: Sound Money and Protection.

The formula is exactly what we need today, protection of American industry, jobs and communities. Protection that is not the overblown caricature of the globalists but rather a protection that seeks to have the full costs to outsourcing realized and taken into account. As for sound money, that is long overdue. The fiat regime of

the central bank zealots is coming to a crushing end. There is no amount of printing that can save us from the wrath of true economics.

We can expect more pushback to efforts by President Trump and the growing legion of elected officials that see the damage done by the globalist agenda. But understanding that these pathetic attacks are simply the end result of dictates from Beijing renders them inert. They have no meaning or bearing. The march to restore America, to return basic industries to our shores, to rebuild tens of thousands of communities will continue. The tide of history cannot be ordered to not come in.

Bill Wilson is the President of the Market Research Foundation and a former board member and former President of Americans for Limited Government.

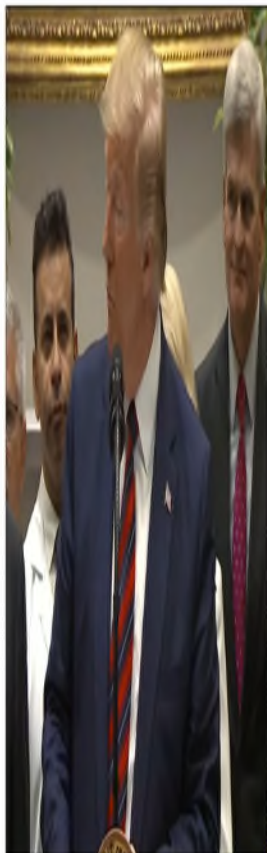
Cartoon: Cabin Fever

By A.F. Branco



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How do conservative groups propose to solve surprise medical billing?



[6](#)

By Richard McCarty

What is surprise medical billing, and what do conservative organizations think should be done to address this problem? Surprise medical billing occurs when a patient has a medical emergency and is taken to an out-of-network emergency room for treatment and then receives a large bill in the mail weeks or months later for care.

Surprise medical billing also occurs when a patient goes to an in-network hospital but is treated by an out-of-network doctor who then sends an unexpected bill weeks or months after treatment. This problem was worsened by Obamacare, which led to narrower networks of health care providers — and more out-of-network providers.

Conservative organizations oppose allowing the government or insurance companies to set rates for out-of-network providers, but they differ in the solutions they support.

In a [letter](#) to Congressional leaders sent last December, several organizations, including the Taxpayers Protection Alliance, Citizens Against Government Waste, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, Consumer Action for a Strong Economy, Frontiers of Freedom, and the 60 Plus Association, wrote in favor of requiring arbitration between health care providers and insurers to settle billing disputes.

From the letter: “Congress should avoid any measures that would seek to address surprise medical billing by creating a government-mandated benchmark (i.e. rate-setting) to determine out-of-network rates for physicians. Current legislative proposals that utilize this approach would expand the government’s reach into healthcare.

“The problem with rate-setting is that in-network rates are inherently discounted during insurer-provider contract negotiations. Using them as the benchmark would artificially suppress rates for physicians providing out-of-network care to the point that enormous financial losses would be shifted to local hospitals and emergency rooms.

“Many of these facilities — particularly the ones serving rural, hard-to-reach communities across the nation — are already operating under razor-thin profit margins, if they are even profitable at all...

“Independent Dispute Resolution (IDR) is a pragmatic solution that leverages a less heavy-handed approach to ending surprise medical billing. Under IDR, both insurers and providers would be able to negotiate out-of-network payments among themselves, ensuring patients are held harmless for any costs above and beyond their standard, in-network and out-of-pocket amounts.”

Doug Badger, of the Heritage Foundation has a different [view](#):

“Congress should impose penalties on insurers that represent medical facilities—and medical facilities that represent themselves—as being in-network if doctors balance bill patients for services they provide at that facility.

“Patients treated at network hospitals never should be balance billed, whether for scheduled or emergency care.

“In other words, a hospital that advertises itself as being in network for insurer A, cannot allow a doctor who provides services there to balance bill a patient covered by insurer A. Ditto for insurer A. It cannot advertise a hospital as being in network if the hospital allows insurer A’s customers to be balanced billed. Neither hospitals nor insurers should be permitted to give patients false and misleading information...

“That leaves the special case of emergency care at non-network hospitals—another circumstance in which patients can get hit with surprise bills. A patient with severe chest pains or one riding in the back of an ambulance can’t shop for a network hospital. Congress can protect such patients by banning non-network hospitals from balance billing for emergency care. Federal regulations currently stipulate that insurers must pay such hospitals the greatest of the Medicare rate, the network rate or the out-of-network rate.

“These changes, combined with greater price transparency, will both eliminate surprise bills and empower consumers to make better decisions about their medical care.”

The [National Taxpayers Union](#) appears to side more with the Heritage Foundation than with those calling for mandatory arbitration:

“Provisions that have been introduced in Congress to address surprise billing introduce what could be a single-payer health care system in disguise. These include additional price controls, federal benchmarks, out-of-network caps, or rate-setting that are all solutions that lead to more government control over who gets health care and who pays for it...

“There are better ways to stop surprise bills, like clearer enforcement of truth in advertising rules, more accurate information on networks, and stronger cost transparency for patients.”

However Congress chooses to deal with surprise medical billing, it should avoid doing anything to further reduce the number of health care providers or to further consolidate the health care industry. Due to our aging population, [doctor](#) and [nursing](#) shortages, and the fact that [hundreds](#) of rural hospitals are at risk of

closure — on top of the scores of rural hospitals that have closed in recent years — the stakes are very high.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research at Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

Video: Will states reopen their schools and economy sooner or later? That will determine the extent of the recession.



To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtCtaVN-Uso>

Should New York City be quarantined?



6

By Robert Romano

55 percent of U.S. coronavirus cases are now in the state of New York, with an outbreak occurring in New York City, the most densely populated area and the largest city in the nation with more than 8 million.

More than 21,000 cases are now reported in New York City, and more than 37,000 statewide. That's out of 68,000 nationwide.

That makes Long Island, Connecticut, New Jersey and Pennsylvania all ground zero for the rest of the country as resources shift to the northeast to mitigate and slow down the virus.

Outbreaks on the west coast in California and Washington appear to have been muted by local efforts at social distancing.

New York City has become the hotbed. Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo issued a [stay at home order on March 20](#) for non-essential workers. Schools in the city have been closed since mid-March.

But not everyone is listening, and now New York has the most cases. [58 percent of their cases in Queens and Brooklyn](#), where anecdotally, relatives of mine who live in the city report people walking around, hanging out and socializing as if they were on vacation with colleges also closed.

Similarly, the New York Times on March 21 [reported](#) certain areas where city life was still functioning as if it were normal: “Elsewhere, outdoor life seemed to thrive in ways that, given the constant reminders for social distancing, seemed reckless. The crowds at the farmers market in Union Square were the size of a pre-coronavirus weekend, with shoppers at one another's elbows. Some neighborhoods in Queens and the Bronx showed similar robust outings. And like Central Park, Brooklyn's Prospect Park remained an outdoor respite for people with nowhere else to go for fresh air.”

NBC News in New York [noted](#) Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo who on March 22 blasted his city, “saying the number of people he saw flaunting the new mandates was ‘wholly inappropriate.’ People were crowding in parks, acting as if nothing had changed.”

So, while the rest of the country has been sheltering in place and shut down for days and weeks, at least early on in the state lockdown, many people in New York City are still openly ignoring governmental health recommendations. Is that why they're having problems now?

Perhaps the reason is because the city's subways have been running through the entire emergency. The bridges are still open. And millions are still commuting every day to the city to and from the surrounding region. But should they still be doing so?

Here, New York City and New York State find themselves at a crossroads, and what they do next will have reverberations throughout the entire country. If Governor Cuomo wanted to, he could order the streets to be cleared with the National Guard to assist police in order to somehow enforce social distancing but so far has ruled out any aggressive approach to the issue. Is he right?

Now, perhaps how the country responds to New York will tell us how seriously we're still taking the coronavirus. So far, the federal government has recommended that persons who have been to New York recently stay apart from others for 14 days. Are they listening?

But the rest of the country could force the issue as those outside New York also have to consider the risks. Maybe a message could be sent.

Should planes still be flying in and out of New York?

Should Amtrak still be running the Northeast Regional up and down the east coast? The Acela nonstop to Washington, D.C. has been [suspended since March 7](#).

What about regional trains that go in and out of New York every day? Buses?

On the other hand, then there's the data. Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus task force coordinator, suggested yesterday the infection rate of the Chinese coronavirus could be much lower than had originally been projected in certain models.

"Either we're only measuring the tip of the iceberg... or we have the transmission completely wrong... The predictions of the models don't match the reality on the ground," [Birx said](#).

[She added](#), "When people start talking about 20 percent of a population being infected, it's very scary... But we don't have data that matches that based on the [actual] experience."

Meaning, even if the fatality rate for the virus is elevated above seasonal flu, the likelihood of it spreading to the entire population might be much lower than originally feared. Is she right?

Let's hope so, but that needs to be sorted out as soon as possible. The entire country is shut down, costing tens of trillions of dollars to the global economy that will have reverberations for at least a decade. Unemployment could quickly go to double digits and might stay there for months or years. Many businesses being closed now will never return.

Is there a great risk for widespread infection or not? Because now that the virus is all over New York, this would be the time to stop it if this disease is as bad as they say before it keeps spreading.

Perhaps the prevalence of the virus in New York might mean additional measures should be considered at containment there even while the rest of the country gets prepared to reopen. Many New Yorkers are not heeding the stay at home order. The worse it gets, the more likely further regional spread will become up and down the eastern seaboard, and the longer this goes on for everyone else.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

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6

April 9, 2020

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Another 6.6 million jobs lost to Chinese coronavirus, up to 19.6 million lost and counting, but Main Street will reopen very soon

Weekly unemployment claims in the U.S. were up another 6.6 million, bringing the total jobs lost since the Chinese coronavirus pandemic anywhere from 16.6 million to 19.6 million as federal and state government closures continue to in order to stave off the virus and protect the elderly and those with underlying conditions, more than doubling the jobs lost during the Great Recession when 8.3 million were lost. That puts the effective unemployment rate 15 percent, pretty much the highest since the Great Depression, with an overall 22 million to 26 million out of work and rising as Americans continue to engage in social distancing. Recall, about 5.8 million were already jobless when the outbreak began when unemployment was just 3.5 percent, a 50-year low, with the worst likely yet to come. This is like a tidal wave washing over the global economy, and no one will be spared. Businesses large and small are being tested during this time, but already the data and the damage is simply catastrophic. Nothing has ever been seen like it. What's worse, it could take

years or a decade to recover, even with well-intentioned measures by Congress to help small and large businesses to shore up payroll. President Donald Trump has requested Congress increase funding for small businesses by another \$250 billion bringing the total up to \$600 billion and the Federal Reserve appears to be opening a secondary market for these small business loans that it will be purchasing as banks make the loans, freeing up more capital to keep the lending going. The next few weeks' unemployment claims reports will bear out the extent of the damage that has already been caused and as can be seen, it is quite extensive. The key thing to understand is that the damage may not be reversible in the short-term as any notions about getting back to 3.5 percent unemployment anytime soon are dispelled. However, with the decisive action being taken today by President Trump and Congress, we can shorten the duration of the job losses and speed the recovery. Main Street will reopen soon, it's only a matter of time.

Video: Bernie is gone, death toll statistics and what about already hurting economies?

Bernie Sanders drops out and mortality projections from Chinese coronavirus continue to drop, and how quickly can the U.S. and global economies recover from this pandemic?

Walden shocks with support for Pelosi Socialized Medicine pathway

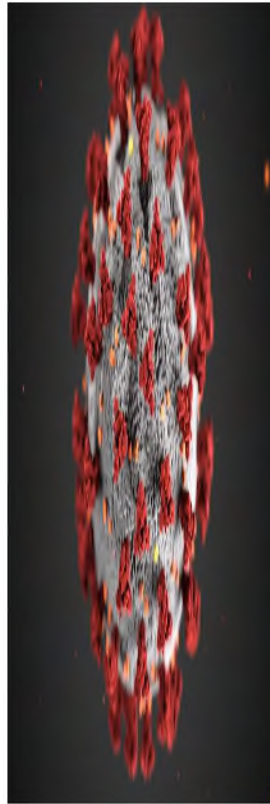
Everyone agrees that America should do everything it can right now to support our health care providers, yet some politicians in Washington, D.C., think this is a perfect time to change the medical payment system in a way that punishes those very health professionals. Under the guise of doing something about Surprise Medical Billing, some members of Congress are cravenly seeking to include one sized fits all medical pricing into the next political grab bag funding bill being drafted by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.). The same Pelosi who delayed passage of a clean funding bill that helped the newly unemployed and the small businesses which are being destroyed by the health emergency economic shutdown in order to get funding for her friends at the Kennedy Center, is seeking to pave the way for socialized medicine through this federal government medical services price fixing scheme. Pelosi's Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) even told the House Progressive Caucus, that this pricing approach is the first-step to Medicare-for-all. However what is both surprising and distressing is that House Energy and Commerce ranking member Greg Walden (R-Oreg.) appeared on MSNBC last week proclaiming the virtues of passing the Pallone bill without ever telling the

public what is in it. Walden, who is retiring from Congress at the end of this term, apparently has decided that mouthing left wing talking points without substance is more important than finding a more local, market-based system for solving the surprise medical billing issue. While it is not surprising that the big health insurance companies support a system that provides nationwide fee certainty as it ensures their profitability, what is shocking is that Republican Greg Walden so easily has fallen into the trap of having the federal government determine health care pricing based upon the “we have to do something” bi-partisan argument that he used on MSNBC.

Miranda Devine: Unmasking WHO as a China apologist

“[The World Health Organization] was wrong about –COVID-19 from the start. It bought China’s lies and then praised its ‘transparency.’ Taiwan warned Dec. 31 that the virus was contagious. Two weeks later, as China was punishing doctors and destroying virus samples, WHO tweeted the Chinese line that there was ‘no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission.’ It wasn’t until March 11, after the virus had taken hold around the world, that WHO declared a pandemic. No wonder the president finally directed his ire this week at WHO, a United Nations agency, and threatened to cut its US funding for failing to warn the world about the disaster brewing in Wuhan. ‘They [WHO] seem to be very China-centric,’ he said. ‘They err on the side of China. They called it wrong. They could have called it months earlier . . . They should have known.’ WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus responded Wednesday with a threat: ‘If you don’t want many more body bags you refrain from politicizing it.’ Really? This is Mafia talk. Not once has Tedros criticized China’s malfeasance, including the hoarding of medical supplies, which caused shortages of protective gear, especially the masks WHO tells us we don’t need. The single most effective measure taken in this country to slow the infiltration of the virus was made against Tedros’ vehement opposition: the president’s China-flight ban on Jan. 3, for which he was slammed as a xenophobe. After the ban, Tedros tweeted: ‘The greatest enemy we face is not the virus itself; it’s the stigma that turns us against each other.’ It’s not stigma sending Americans to hospital gasping for breath. It’s not stigma piling up bodies in refrigerated trucks in Brooklyn. We must never again trust woke transnational bureaucracies.”

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By Robert Romano

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That puts the effective unemployment rate 15 percent, pretty much the highest since the Great Depression, with an overall 22 million to 26 million out of work and rising as Americans continue to engage in social distancing. Recall, about [5.8 million](#) were already jobless when the outbreak began when unemployment was just 3.5 percent, a 50-year low, with the worst likely yet to come.

This is like a tidal wave washing over the global economy, and no one will be spared. Businesses large and small are being tested during this time, but already the damage and the damage is simply catastrophic. Nothing has ever been seen like it. What's worse, it could take years or a decade to recover, even with well-intentioned measures by Congress to help small and large businesses to shore up payroll.

President Donald Trump has requested Congress increase funding for small businesses by another \$250 billion bringing the total up to \$600 billion, even while [others say](#) there should be no cap. In the meantime, the Federal Reserve [appears to be](#) opening a secondary market for these small business loans that it will be purchasing as banks make the loans, freeing up more capital to keep the lending going. The April 8 Fed release [stated](#), "To facilitate lending to small businesses via the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), the Federal Reserve will establish a facility to provide term financing backed by PPP loans. Additional details will be announced this week."

The biggest challenge for these lending programs is probably letting small businesses know they exist and that these loans are available, and convincing them that retaining payroll is more advantageous than laying off employees while much of the economy is still closed and is expected to be for several weeks more while the virus runs its course.

Already, Vice President Mike Pence reports more than \$98 billion loans have been made to hundreds of thousands of small businesses. Is it enough, though?

On one hand, one can make a case for a swift rebound, that as soon as the closures end and states reopen their economies, all the businesses will open their doors quickly and Americans will swiftly get back to work.

On the other, [as I was noting earlier this week](#), in analyzing the 10 recessions since 1948, on average, it takes about 11 months for all job losses to be realized in a recession, and then on average another 16 months to get those jobs back. Sometimes it's longer sometimes it's shorter. The longest cycle took 7 years with the Great Recession. The shortest was the 1970-1971 recession that took 12 months.

So, bare minimum, small businesses will need at least a year or more of support to survive. The CARES Act includes up to \$6 trillion from the Federal Reserve. Already, the Small Business Administration and Treasury are working with the Fed to expand payroll protection lending.

The expansive nature of the program is not unsurprising. In 2008, Congress passed the \$700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program to buy privately issued mortgage backed securities from banks, but it instantly became obsolete when the Fed took over AIG and derivatives markets. Additionally, the Fed then purchased the Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac mortgage backed securities directly off the banks' balance sheets, totaling trillions. That's because no matter how big Congress thought the problem was, it was in fact larger. Much, much larger.

For the Trump administration to accomplish what they're trying to do to save 30 million small businesses, the backbone of the economy, it could require trillions of dollars. Congress already created the vehicle for doing so by expanding the Fed's mandate, recognizing that in an emergency like this, only the Federal Reserve will have enough firepower to deal with the magnitude of the damage being caused by the pandemic-induced government closures.

Additional tools the Fed should consider will be to weaken the dollar [relative to other currencies](#), even as interest rates collapse — yes, both are possible simultaneously, [look at 2009 and 2011](#) when dollar bottoms coincided with labor market and housing market bottoms — amid heightened demand for U.S. securities including treasuries, which can help hasten the recovery and, critically, stave off deflation that must be a real threat with demand completely collapsed at the moment.

So, hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.

Right now, we are witnessing the flight to safety as financial institutions stock up on treasuries, which with unemployment still rising sharply, is expected. That won't last forever but it will probably go on for a good long while. Like the virus, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. First things first, kill the virus and that will give the confidence states and businesses need to reopen sooner rather than later.

But, simultaneously, we have to make sure there's an economy to return to.

The next few weeks' unemployment claims reports will bear out the extent of the damage that has already been caused and as can be seen, it is quite extensive. The key thing to understand is that the damage may not be reversible in the short-term even with the program Congress created. But that does not mean that the program is not ultimately necessary. Quite the contrary. That lifeline will be the reason we get out of this much, much faster than might have been otherwise possible.

By now, any notions about getting back to 3.5 percent unemployment anytime soon have probably been dispelled, but with the decisive action being taken today by President Trump and Congress, we can shorten the duration of the job losses and speed the recovery. Main Street will reopen soon, it's only a matter of time.

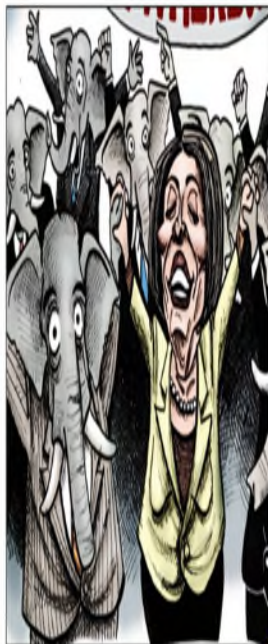
Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

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Walden shocks with support for Pelosi Socialized Medicine pathway



By Rick Manning

Everyone agrees that America should do everything it can right now to support our health care providers, yet some politicians in Washington, D.C., think this is a perfect time to change the medical payment system in a way that punishes those very health professionals.

Under the guise of doing something about Surprise Medical Billing, some members of Congress are cravenly seeking to include one sized fits all medical pricing into the next political grab bag funding bill being drafted by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.). The same Pelosi who delayed passage of a clean funding bill that helped the newly unemployed and the small businesses which are being destroyed by the health emergency economic shutdown in order to get funding for her friends at the Kennedy Center, is seeking to pave the way for socialized medicine through this federal government medical services price fixing scheme.

Pelosi's Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) even told the House Progressive Caucus, that this pricing approach is the first-step to Medicare-for-all.

However what is both surprising and distressing is that House Energy and Commerce ranking member Greg Walden (R-Oreg.) appeared on [MSNBC](#) last week proclaiming the virtues of passing the Pallone bill without ever telling the public what is in it. Walden, who is retiring from Congress at the end of this term, apparently has decided that mouthing left wing talking points without substance is more important than finding a more local, market-based system for solving the surprise medical billing issue.

While it is not surprising that the big health insurance companies support a system that provides nationwide fee certainty as it ensures their profitability, what is shocking is that Republican Greg Walden so easily has fallen into the trap of having the federal government determine health care pricing based upon the “we have to do something” bi-partisan argument that he used on MSNBC.

It is also surprising that Walden ignores the fact that in California, where the Pelosi-Pallone national pricing system is being tried, medical providers are being forced out of the state as the reimbursement costs for their services are not enough to cover the costs of providing medical services.

Rep. Walden knows that Senator Bill Cassidy (R-La.), a medical doctor, has a solution to surprise medical billing that puts disputed bills between health providers and insurers who patients pay to cover these expenses in front of a local neutral arbiter, who decides based upon the evidence what the costs should be. While a far cry from an ideal free market solution, this idea which is working in New York State, keeps federal politicians out of the medical pricing game while protecting patients from getting gouged by unexpected demands for payment.

Rather than push the common-sense approach put forward by Senator Cassidy which protects patients in a fair process, Greg Walden’s federal rate setting plan would be disastrous for those very patients he claims to want to protect by putting doctors and other health providers out of business.

The resulting doctor and hospital shortages would most affect rural communities as insurers would be allowed to pay doctors less than the value of the critical care they provide.

Now is the time we should be protecting our doctors fighting on the frontlines against this deadly pandemic. We see the private health care system, already shackled by previous federal Democrat regulations and mandates, stepping up to the plate to do battle with the China-originated COVID-19 virus. Putting their lives on the line as they treat patients in emergency rooms and intensive care units.

Instead Washington, D.C. politicians like Nancy Pelosi, Frank Pallone and yes, even Greg Walden, see the next massive pandemic spending bill as an opportunity to impose a pathway to socialized medicine on the American public and those very health providers we are so dependent upon.

It is time for Americans to say no to socialized medicine by going to <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=ee102a22-b2440309-ee101b1d-0cc47a6d17cc-10a0b168caa04455&u=http://www.stopsocializedmedicine.org/> and telling your representatives to oppose one-size fits all medical rate setting. Let's stop Pelosi from using this crisis to socialize medicine in America.

Rick Manning is the President of Americans for Limited Government.



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ALG Editor's Note: [In the following featured column from the New York Post](#), as Americans opt for cloth masks, the China apologist World Health Organization questions the utility:



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Unmasking WHO as a China apologist

By Miranda Devine

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [reversed its position](#) and recommended that Americans wear masks after all, even if asymptomatic.

On Monday, the World Health Organization, as if it hasn't caused enough trouble, decided to contradict the CDC.

"Masks alone cannot stop the #COVID19 pandemic," [WHO said in a flurry of 12 tweets](#).

"What is clear is that there is limited research in this area."

Then it pumped out a confusing, five-page paper claiming: "There is currently no evidence that wearing a mask . . . by healthy persons in the wider community setting . . . can prevent them from infection."

But that flies in the face of a study from Singapore, cited by the CDC, that healthy people can spread the virus without symptoms. N95 masks needed by health workers are in short supply but even homemade cloth masks are better than nothing.

The unhelpful mask conflict is typical of the toxic pointlessness of WHO. It is worse than useless. It is what it accuses masks of being: a costly distraction that lulls you into a false sense of security.

What's it been doing in the 17 years since the last deadly respiratory virus, SARS, emerged from China?

WHO was wrong about -COVID-19 from the start. It bought China's lies and then praised its "transparency."

Taiwan warned Dec. 31 that the virus was contagious. Two weeks later, as China was punishing doctors and destroying virus samples, WHO tweeted the Chinese line that there was "no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission."

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No wonder the president finally [directed his ire this week at WHO](#), a United Nations agency, and threatened to cut its US funding for failing to warn the world about the disaster brewing in Wuhan.

“They [WHO] seem to be very China-centric,” he said. “They err on the side of China. They called it wrong. They could have called it months earlier . . . They should have known.”

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Really? This is Mafia talk.

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After the ban, Tedros tweeted: “The greatest enemy we face is not the virus itself; it’s the stigma that turns us against each other.”

It’s not stigma sending Americans to hospital gasping for breath. It’s not stigma piling up bodies in refrigerated trucks in Brooklyn.

We must never again trust woke transnational bureaucracies.

Instead, we should follow de Blasio’s lead and wear any mask we can find. If WHO is against them, it’s a fair bet they’re worthwhile.

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6

For Immediate Release

Contact: Rick Manning

April 14, 2020

Phone: 703-383-0880

Pelosi and Schumer should not get a fourth bite at the apple, keep the bill clean

April 14, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging that if Congress does anything else to help small businesses, it be a clean bill:

“Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer should not be given a fourth bite of the Coronavirus Christmas tree apple. Any bill that passes needs to be clean, meaning it must not have any sidebar goodies like the federal takeover of elections, one-size fits all medical rate setting language or other non-germane bailouts of the U.S.

Postal Service or private union pension plans. America is tired of having Pelosi hold small business’ survival hostage while she extorts money and favors for her friends.”

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6

April 15, 2020

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Pelosi, Schumer take small businesses hostage—again. The trouble is they'll kill the hostage.

Small business relief that was included in the \$2.2 trillion legislation passed by Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump to shore up payrolls of millions of American workers during the Chinese coronavirus pandemic has been so popular that it is in danger of running out. As of Tuesday, the \$350 billion program had already exhausted \$257 billion as President Trump's top economic advisor told Fox Business, "At the present run-rate, we're going to be out of money." 30 million small businesses employ up to 60 million Americans, the backbone of the U.S. economy, and for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, the shortfalls are just fine. Those are hostages. The trouble is everyone knows they'll kill the hostages, figuratively speaking, of course. That is, they'll let those funds run out, even if it means tens of millions more Americans will lose their jobs for good while they wait to exact another toll from taxpayers on behalf of their

own special interests, including state and local governments they want to bail out again. It's a free for all.

Video: 50 states taking lead on closures & when to reopen is the constitutional way, not one-size-fits-all

The COVID-19 pandemic closures, and how the economy will be reopened, are a case study in federalism.

Open Letter to Larry Fink, CEO, BlackRock

As the nation stands at the edge of an economic precipice and stares into it bleakly, you and your firm, the largest asset management company in the world, play an important role in calming fears, easing worries, and promising a return to normalcy. This role is exaggerated, in scope and magnitude, by the faith that the Federal Reserve has placed in you to help guide and manage its efforts to alleviate the current stress on the financial system. In light of all of this, we ask that you reconsider your controversial annual letter from January 14th to the world's largest investors that BlackRock will operate under a "stakeholder" model rather than the well-established "shareholder" primacy model. While we had concerns when this was first announced, the current pandemic has created a health crisis that is in turn creating an unexpected economic crisis. This economic crisis makes it more important than ever that companies like BlackRock focus on helping our nation's economy recover. BlackRock and others must not add additional hurdles to recovery by supporting unnecessary and harmful environmental, social, and governance (ESG) shareholder proposals.

Pelosi and Schumer should not get a fourth bite at the apple, keep the bill clean

Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning: "Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer should not be given a fourth bite of the Coronavirus Christmas tree apple. Any bill that passes needs to be clean, meaning it must not have any sidebar goodies like the federal takeover of elections, one-size fits all medical rate setting language or other non-germane bailouts of the U.S. Postal Service or private union pension plans. America is tired of having Pelosi hold small business' survival hostage while she extorts money and favors for her friends."

Pelosi, Schumer take small businesses hostage—again. The trouble is they'll kill the hostage.



By Robert Romano

Small business relief that was included in the \$2.2 trillion legislation passed by Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump to shore up payrolls of millions of American workers during the Chinese coronavirus pandemic has been so popular that it is in danger of running out.

As of Tuesday, the \$350 billion program had [already exhausted \\$257 billion](#) as President Trump's top economic advisor told Fox Business, "At the present run-rate, we're going to be out of money."

30 million small businesses employ up to 60 million Americans, the backbone of the U.S. economy, and for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), the shortfalls are just fine. Those are hostages.

The trouble is everyone knows they'll kill the hostages, figuratively speaking, of course.

That is, they'll let those funds run out, even if it means tens of millions more Americans will lose their jobs for good while they wait to exact another toll from taxpayers on behalf of their own special interests, including state and local governments they want to bail out again.

It's a free for all.

Perhaps Pelosi and Schumer have figured that with the pandemic destroying small businesses and anywhere from 17 to 20 million who have already lost their jobs, that soon there won't be any more taxpayers to pay city and state taxes should the closures go on much longer. As an aside, hopefully they'll learn a lesson when they consider their job-killing Green New Deal and universal income schemes in the future, but I tend to doubt it.

Thing is, the closures destroying the private sector are being ordered by state and local governments. It's a taking under the Constitution, with livelihoods being taken away, owing of just compensation. They broke it, they bought it.

And governments will never run out of money, even state and locals. Not really. Governments can borrow on the bond markets at some of the lowest interest rates ever and they'll continue to do so no matter what. As a last resort, the Federal Reserve will intervene if it gets really bad. We all know it. Government employees by and large will not lose their jobs in this pandemic.

But many of those small businesses will go away forever.

As it is, with almost 20 million Americans who have already lost their jobs, the damage being wrought will likely take years or a decade to recover from. That is why the longer the closures go on, the more assistance these entities will need.

And, apparently, the more demands House and Senate Democrats will make to ensure that they're not giving up any hostages for free.

It's a very dangerous game. As cash reserves are depleted these businesses will fail forever and millions more will be thrown out of work. Without revenues, every aspect of the economy will seize up and become a vast financial crisis as households become unable to pay their debts. The unemployment benefits passed by Congress won't cover them. Then, banks. People will break quarantine before then out of desperation, potentially endangering lives.

This leaves President Trump with just a few options. Keep going to Congress periodically to get this money for small businesses and keep paying the Democrats' toll. Have Congress remove the limit on emergency small business lending. Or perhaps have Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin go to the Federal Reserve to expand the program in accordance with the legislation Congress already passed or to build out a new program suited to the task.

As it is, with economic recessions and then recoveries lasting on average 27 months since 1948 — [11 months to lose all the jobs, and 16 months to get them all back](#) — these small businesses will probably need support beyond the extent of the current pandemic. And if the closures are going to go on much longer, the limits on the current emergency program will have to be lifted. Whatever option the President goes with, he must not allow Pelosi and Schumer to kill the hostage.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Video: 50 states taking lead on closures & when to reopen is the constitutional way, not one-size-fits-all



To view online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zG3wycS7gDE>

Open Letter to Larry Fink, CEO, BlackRock

April 15, 2020

Mr. Lawrence Fink, Chief Executive Officer
BlackRock, Inc.
Park Avenue Plaza
55 East 52nd Street
New York, NY 10055-0003

Dear Mr. Fink,

As the nation stands at the edge of an economic precipice and stares into it bleakly, you and your firm, the largest asset management company in the world, play an important role in calming fears, easing worries, and promising a return to normalcy. This role is exaggerated, in scope and magnitude, by the faith that the Federal Reserve has placed in you to help guide and manage its efforts to alleviate the current stress on the financial system.

In light of all of this, we ask that you reconsider your controversial annual letter from January 14th to the world's largest investors that BlackRock will operate under a "stakeholder" model rather than the well-established "shareholder" primacy model. While we had concerns when this was first announced, the current pandemic has created a health crisis that is in turn creating an unexpected economic crisis.

This economic crisis makes it more important than ever that companies like BlackRock focus on helping our nation's economy recover. BlackRock and others must not add additional hurdles to recovery by supporting unnecessary and harmful environmental, social, and governance (ESG) shareholder proposals.

As an asset manager and a publicly traded company, your job is to act as a steward of investors' capital. By opting to enter into a public market, BlackRock received the benefit of outside investment funds with which to operate and grow.

However, the bargain of that benefit is that you must act in good faith and with a fiduciary responsibility to maximize returns for those investors.

Because of your experience and position, your actions influence not only the financial future of millions of Americans but also actions taken by other companies. In light of your influence, we are especially concerned that your support for some ESG shareholder proposals and investor initiatives brings political interests into decisions that should be guided by shareholder interests. Shareholders and society at large benefit when companies are guided by values such as producing quality products and services, having integrity in dealing with customers and vendors, and developing the talents and skills of employees. But when a company's values become politicized, the interests of the diverse group of shareholders and customers are overshadowed by the narrow interests of activist groups pushing a political agenda.

Most ESG shareholder proposals are sponsored by activist groups that abuse the proxy process to achieve social and cultural changes that are entirely unmoored from the interests of corporate shareholders. Environmental nonprofits, labor unions, left-leaning pension funds, ESG-focused asset managers, and left-wing activists are unconcerned with corporate performance. Their goals are societal and political.

Furthermore, these ESG proposals will add an extra-regulatory cost on these companies requiring them to spend their shareholder capital. This may harm everyday Americans who are invested in these companies through pension funds and retirement plans. While this won't affect folks in your income bracket, this may be the difference between affording medication, being able to retire, or supporting a family member's education for many Americans.

There is a financial risk to this tack as well. The *Wall Street Journal* recently [reported](#) that “[p]erformance of BlackRock’s own iShares range of ESG funds shows that ESG is no guarantee of gold-plated returns. Its two oldest in the U.S., set up in 2005 and 2006 and now tracking the MSCI USA ESG Select index and the MSCI KLD 400 Social index, have both lagged behind iShares’ S&P 500 fund.”

And while publicly traded companies operate under a legal fiduciary duty to their investors, this is also a moral imperative. Free market capitalism has lifted more people out of poverty than any economic system in world history. That’s because, at its simplest level, capitalism operates under the basic rule that all exchanges are voluntary. Therefore, to achieve wealth and create growth in a capitalist system, one must appeal to the self-interest of others.

At this moment especially, all of us — including BlackRock — must be focused on the nation’s economic recovery. Investors, many of whom are terrified that their retirement funds have been lost or are at risk, need to be assured that managers of their assets are focused on those facets of business performance that are likely to produce a sustained return on investment and a return to financial normalcy. Extraneous political considerations serve only to sow confusion and exacerbate instability, when instability can least be tolerated. In unsettled environments such as this, true “sustainability” is demonstrated by robustness and resilience, not by highly politicized trends and fads.

It is a major concern that your statements run counter to this basic and well-established model. During the best of times, the purpose of any business is to return a profit for shareholders by providing goods and services that consumers want and need. But especially during times of grave threat to the economic health of the nation, that purpose — and not a political agenda — should be top of mind for businesses and for investors.

Justin Danhof, General Counsel, National Center for Public Policy Research

Bill Meierling, Executive Director, Shareholder Equity Alliance

Stephen R. Soukup, Publisher/Vice President, The Political Forum

Steve Moore, Founder, Committee to Unleash Prosperity

Edwin Meese III, Former Attorney General of the United States

David Brat, Dean, School of Business, Liberty University

Ken Eldred, Investor, Living Stones Foundation

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David L. Black, Ph.D., Founder and CEO, 2ndVote

Morton Blackwell, President, The Leadership Institute

Jenny Beth Martin, Honorary Chairman, Tea Party Patriots Action

David McIntosh, President, Club for Growth

Seth Dillon, CEO, The Babylon Bee

Brian Glicklich, CEO, Digital Strategies

LTC Allen B. West (USA Ret.), Fmr. Member, U.S. House of Representatives

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Ginni Thomas, President, Liberty Consulting

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Jake Hoffman, President & CEO, Rally Forge

Dr. Tim Daughtry, Author, Daughtry & Company

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Richard Morrison, Research Fellow, Competitive Enterprise Institute

Scott Thomas Parkinson, Vice President of Government Affairs, Club for Growth

David W. Almasi, Vice President, National Center for Public Policy Research

Billie Tucker, CEO, CEO Service Bureau

CC: The Honorable Jerome Powell, Chairman
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
20th Street & Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20551



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Pelosi and Schumer should not get a fourth bite at the apple, keep the bill clean

April 14, 2020, Fairfax, Va.—Americans for Limited Government President Rick Manning today issued the following statement urging that if Congress does anything else to help small businesses, it be a clean bill:

“Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer should not be given a fourth bite of the Coronavirus Christmas tree apple. Any bill that passes needs to be clean, meaning it must not have any sidebar goodies like the federal takeover of elections, one-size fits all medical rate setting language or other non-germane bailouts of the U.S.

Postal Service or private union pension plans. America is tired of having Pelosi hold small business’ survival hostage while she extorts money and favors for her friends.”

To view online: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=c290af62-9ec5a6b2-c2909e5d-0cc47a6a52de-baffade1f63da308&u=https://getliberty.org/2020/04/pelosi-and-schumer-should-not-get-a-fourth-bite-at-the-apple-keep-the-bill-clean/>

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Type:	Note



6

April 10, 2020

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President Trump chose life at every turn in the war against the virus—and that's a good thing

At some point early in the Chinese coronavirus pandemic, President Donald Trump had a choice to make. Jan. 20, was when China finally confirmed human-to-human transmission, more than a month after the outbreak began. At that point, high mortality rates were not yet on the radar. But on Jan. 24, China would lock down Wuhan and the surrounding region. A day later, on Jan. 25, the first doctor to treat the virus and who tried to warn the world about it died from it in China, raising international awareness. That was the seminal moment that told both the public and world leaders two very important things: 1) this virus is much worse than was realized; and 2) that was because China was lying about it. On Jan. 29, the President appointed the White House coronavirus task force. The State Department was already evacuating people from Wuhan. At that point only a few hundred people had died in China. On Jan. 31, he suspended all travel from China. Now we know those early calls were critical and bought America time, enough time to get ready for

the worst of the storm that we are now in. By March 13, President Trump had declared a national emergency and deregulated the FDA approval process so we'd have some way to treat the virus and might help us lessen its severity. States followed in short order with cancelling schools, with the stay at home orders coming thereafter. At every turn, President Trump chose life, acted decisively and has led the country through this emergency — and the American people by and large have followed his leadership. And that's a good thing.

Cartoon: Stupid Pet Tricks

China has a few parrots and lapdogs.

Video: Newly unemployed in the millions, surprise medical billing and beefing up small business loans.

More than 17 million Americans have lost their jobs to the Chinese coronavirus pandemic.

We need to reopen the economy ASAP before our small businesses are decimated

Nearly half of U.S. workers are employed by small business, and the coronavirus and the shutdowns are taking a severe toll on these businesses. According to a survey by the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), 92 percent of small businesses have been harmed by the coronavirus. Of these negatively impacted businesses, 80 percent have seen declining sales, and 31 percent have had their supply chains disrupted. Furthermore, about half of small businesses report that they will not be able to survive for more than two months if things do not change. Of course, the NFIB survey respondents are not alone.

Video: After the Chinese coronavirus, we need to make in America to protect lives and national security

One thing the Chinese coronavirus has proven is that in a national emergency or a war, global supply chains can get people killed when the shortages begin.

President Trump chose life at every turn in the war against the virus—and that's a good thing



[6](#)

By Robert Romano

At some point early in the Chinese coronavirus pandemic, President Donald Trump had a choice to make. While Congress was hopelessly distracted with impeachment mania, the first case had arrived in the U.S. on Jan. 15 in Washington state from Wuhan, China, and would not be [identified](#) until Jan. 20. That was just three days after the [second death](#) had been reported from Wuhan on Jan. 17.

The same day, on Jan. 20, was when China finally [confirmed](#) human-to-human transmission, more than a month after the outbreak began. At that point, high mortality rates were not yet on the radar. But on Jan. 24, China would [lock down Wuhan](#) and the surrounding region. A day later, on Jan. 25, the first doctor to treat

the virus and [who tried to warn the world](#) about it [died](#) from it in China, raising international awareness.

That was the seminal moment that told both the public and world leaders two very important things: 1) this virus is much worse than was realized; and 2) that was because China was lying about it.

On Jan. 28, Hong Kong [closed](#) its border with China. On Jan. 29 the New England Journal of Medicine [reported](#) that the virus was likely spreading in Wuhan at least since mid-December. At that point, many airlines were already suspending flights to China. So what did Trump do?

On Jan. 29, the President [appointed](#) the White House coronavirus task force. The State Department was already [evacuating](#) people from Wuhan. At that point only a few hundred people had died in China. On Jan. 31, he [suspended](#) all travel from China, and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar [declared](#) a public health emergency. Any U.S. citizen returning from China was to be subjected to a mandatory quarantine.

Now we know those early calls were critical and bought America time, enough time to get ready for the worst of the storm that we are now in. It would not be until Feb. 11 that the worldwide death toll would surpass 1,000. Not until Feb. 21 that [Italy](#) would report its first death as its own national lockdown would begin. Iran and South Korea were starting to have bigger problems, too.

On Feb. 26, Vice President Mike Pence was named the head of the task force.

By Feb. 29, Washington state had [declared](#) a state of emergency as the U.S. reported its first death in the same state, and the nursing home outbreak began. Travel from Iran was suspended. By then, markets were in a free fall.

The next two weeks would see states declaring states of emergency as the panic about testing began. On March 11, travel from Europe was [suspended](#). By March 13, President Trump had [declared](#) a national emergency and joined the coronavirus task force [press briefing](#) to announce the administration's joint effort with the private sector for drive-thru testing for the virus, calming public fears. States followed in short order with cancelling schools, with the stay at home orders

coming thereafter. Additionally, the emergency declaration paved the way to waiving Food and Drug Administration (FDA) restrictions — [over FDA scientists' objections](#) — on antiviral treatments and other therapeutics.

On the antivirals and other therapeutics, what President Trump did there was truly important, because we're still about a year away from a vaccine with a whole other cold and flu season that will start in the fall. We really need something, anything, that might prevent the virus from spreading in our bodies or lessen the severity of infection. We're not going to stay inside for another year. President Trump seems convinced hydroxychloroquine with zinc might be that answer. Who knows? Maybe we'll all be eating supplemental hydroxychloroquine-zinc tablets or something like it in the fall. Or perhaps it will be one of the other antiviral treatments that Trump's deregulation of the FDA made possible. We need something.

At every turn, President Trump has chosen life, even sacrificing the health of the economy while having the foresight to work with Congress with leaders in both parties to put in place the \$2.2 trillion economic rescue plan that can be increased to \$6 trillion to help as many employers as possible including 30 million small businesses to keep payroll plus expanding unemployment benefits, all to encourage Americans to stay home while we wait out the pandemic. Undoubtedly Congress will need to do more when there are no new cases and the economy begins to be reopened in stages.

Since that time, we are learning more about the [projections](#) on mortality, where the task force has warned that if nothing had been done, as many as 2.2 million Americans could have died, predominantly seniors. Since then, with mitigation, those projections were dropped, to 200,000, to 100,000, to 91,000, to 82,000 and now just 60,000, and it seems likely it will keep right on falling. That, even as the percentage rate of mortality has remained relatively consistent at about 3.5 percent of reported cases resulting in death.

That means everything the President and states have set in motion is working. The U.S. is winning the war.

Because of the unknown degree of asymptomatic transmission, the actual percentage rate for mortality is most certainly lower, but without a randomized large-scale test of the population for antibodies to see how far the virus has been,

compared to the total deaths, there's no way to know. I urged that those tests be conducted as soon as possible late last month.

But those tests are coming. For example, a few [in Germany](#) are already underway. And they'll be done here, too, which should give the American people a really good idea soon how deadly the virus really is. I suspect it will confirm what we were being told all along, that it was far deadlier than the seasonal flu. Just my guess, I'd actually like to be wrong about that because then that would mean we could get back to our normal lives sooner rather than later.

Politically, though, it seems clear this is the path the American people preferred. They chose life, too, in spite of the economic turmoil we are all experiencing.

How this issue was brought to the table gives you an idea about how the politics of the virus have played out so far. The mainstream media, perhaps thinking it was doing Democrats a favor in the 2020 election, helped fuel public panic and mass hysteria over the coronavirus once the high death rates were reported overseas. Italy being put on lockdown was an eye-opener. The American people were told from panicked newscasters that millions of Americans would die if nothing was done. The public in turn demanded the government to act decisively. This effect was particularly pronounced among Democrats predisposed to disapprove of Trump, but also seniors who appeared to be the most vulnerable from dying.

That reporting helped set the agenda, and then primed the issue for how Trump would be evaluated, betting he would do the opposite of their proposed course.

In so doing, this created a political opportunity for the White House to respond not only to public concerns, but also dire warnings from public health officials about the high reported death rates. As the public came to learn, the White House was slightly ahead of the curve, insofar as travel restrictions had already been issued two days after the task force was named. And then the administration has been ramping up ever since. Now the press conferences are must see TV, watching the government response in action.

The President and the Vice President have led the task force, leaned on their advisors, coordinated with FEMA, the military and state governors, recruited the private sector for testing and cures, declared the national emergency and then

states followed suit by closing up shop. The public settled down and now we're all either working from home or newly laid off along with I count [anywhere from 17 million to 20 million jobs lost](#) and rising.

The effect? You've all seen the polls. But here's the latest from Fox News, which usually oversamples Democrats, where President Trump is at his highest approval ever in their poll [at 49 percent](#), including 13 percent of Clinton voters, 19 percent among blacks and 52 percent above age 45. His approval on handling the national emergency is 51 percent. The federal government's approval is 56 percent. 57 percent say the country is on the right track with the virus. 70 percent say they're still very concerned about the spread of the virus, 24 percent say somewhat concerned. 80 percent of blacks now say they are very concerned, more than any other group, undoubtedly owing to new data highlighted by the task force showing disproportionate deaths among African-Americans. State governments and governors get higher marks but that's not surprising. Presidential approval is always going to be more divided along partisan grounds especially in an election year but you can spot the trend already in play. It's still 7 months until the election but public attitudes are being set right now.

[A CNBC poll](#) shows much the same thing, even more pronounced, with Trump earning 20 percent approval among Democrats.

As an analyst, I am struck that anywhere from 17 to 20 million Americans have already lost their jobs, and yet they're overwhelmingly approving of the policy that led to it. In these same polls, the American people are indeed worried about the economy, but right now they're more worried about the virus. And until there's a vaccine or something else that can help, I suspect that will remain the case.

In hindsight, the media might be thinking twice about the dire warnings of millions dying. We still don't know what the representative sample serological tests are going to come out and say. But they're coming soon. Again, it may be that we'll find out the death rate was far, far lower than initially projected, which would be great news because then we could open everything up much faster, although my guess is it will still come in at about what was said, so about still 2 million or a little less than that if everyone had gotten sick, and plenty of studies showing in the wild it was highly contagious.

Mitigation seems to be working and so hopefully we're down to no new cases in a month or so. I'm also looking forward to learning about the effectiveness of the new treatments being used and how successful doctors were at saving lives.

But in a month or so, there's no new cases, and then a few weeks later no new deaths, we'll have an idea of what the death toll was, and what it could have been. At that point, the public will render a judgment.

Trump will easily be able to say at that point he helped saved hundreds of thousands or millions of lives, and a public that was demanding action, and overwhelmingly approving the national lockdown, will probably give him a good share of the credit for leading the country during this time. It's a layup politically, and the RNC and Congressional Republicans will be running full steam in short order on that messaging. Trump will be making a big play for the African-American vote, too, which he was going to do anyway but now he'll have additional credibility on the virus once the total dead is known and it's far less than the worst case scenario that the public believed.

I tend to doubt Democrats will be able to successfully make a case the policy failed, and they will now find it difficult to shift to blaming the administration for the economy after making the case that the economy had to take a backseat, which it did. They got what they wanted. I say they should have been careful what they wished for.

A few weeks ago, I [predicted](#) we might see pronounced effects among seniors approving of the policy who were the most vulnerable and that has in fact turned up, here, and in other polls, like the [Washington Post-ABC poll](#) conducted mid-March. Trump's elevated approval indicates he has also won over many Democrats by responding as aggressively as he did.

Now, I make no judgments about how the American people will respond over a longer term if states keep things closed for long while as the economy is still crashed. At some point, we will shift into a debate about how to reopen the economy and get the nation back on its feet. An open question is how quickly the economy gets reopened, and if we will be back to business as usual in the fall. I hope so. My thinking there is if the jobs numbers are pointed back in the right direction, that will certainly help the President in his reelection bid, but even if they're not

because everything's still closed, again, I'm struck that the public so far has overwhelmingly preferred the recession option and has cooperated with the social distancing.

President Trump chose life, acted decisively and has led the country through this emergency — and the American people by and large have followed his leadership. And that's a good thing.

Robert Romano is the Vice President of Public Policy at Americans for Limited Government.

Cartoon: Stupid Pet Tricks

By A.F. Branco



[6](#)

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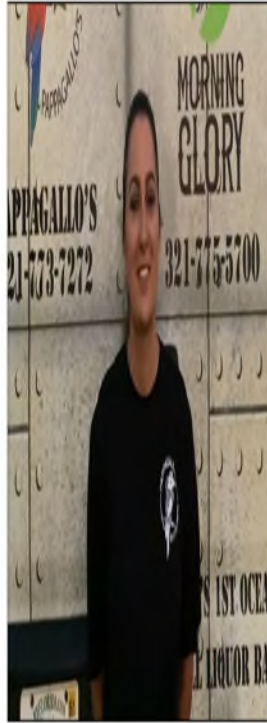
Video: Newly unemployed in the millions, surprise medical billing and beefing up small business loans.



[6](#)

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**We need to reopen the economy ASAP before our small businesses are
decimated**



6

By Richard McCarty

Nearly half of U.S. workers are employed by small business, and the coronavirus and the shutdowns are taking a severe toll on these businesses. According to a survey by the [National Federation of Independent Business](#) (NFIB), 92 percent of small businesses have been harmed by the coronavirus. Of these negatively impacted businesses, 80 percent have seen declining sales, and 31 percent have had their supply chains disrupted. Furthermore, about half of small businesses report that they will not be able to survive for more than two months if things do not change. Of course, the NFIB survey respondents are not alone.

Here is what a few small business owners from across the country had to say about their situations, just prior to Congress enacting the \$2.2 trillion economic rescue plan to help as many employers as possible to keep payroll.

[Trisha R.](#) is a co-owner of Pappagallo's Pizza and Morning Glory Eatery, which are family restaurants in Satellite Beach, Florida.

"Pappagallo's has been around for thirty years. We might be able to last a month... Morning Glory just recently opened, and I don't think we'll last... another week or two. We're going to go out [of business] if we can't get back to work. We're really hurting... We need to get back open as soon as possible... A thirty year business going out would just be detrimental... to our family and to everybody's family that's involved in our business."

[Levi G.](#) owns GEI Utility Construction in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

"Our company has been impacted by the coronavirus, the COVID-19, in a multitude of ways. First and foremost, it's shutting down our biggest job sites that we have working so I'm not able to keep my employees busy. I'm not able to redirect them to other jobs now because our state has a shelter-in-place order, and even if I were able to do those things... our kids are out of school now for the remainder of the year... I think that... the longer this goes on, the more lasting effect this is going to have on our economy... Our company is not highly leveraged so we can last a little longer than some companies. We're fortunate in that matter, but we will lose employees."

[Paul L.](#) is the owner of Loveland Home Solutions, a residential electrical service company in St. Charles, Missouri.

"Like everyone else, we have been impacted by this virus threatening our country. We need the government to let us go back to work because small business is the backbone of this country – and, like most people, we are one job away from bankruptcy... The country could not survive an extended shutdown any more than it could survive a killing virus."

[Evan H.](#) is the founder and CEO of Vested Networks, a business phone service company based in Lewisville, Texas.

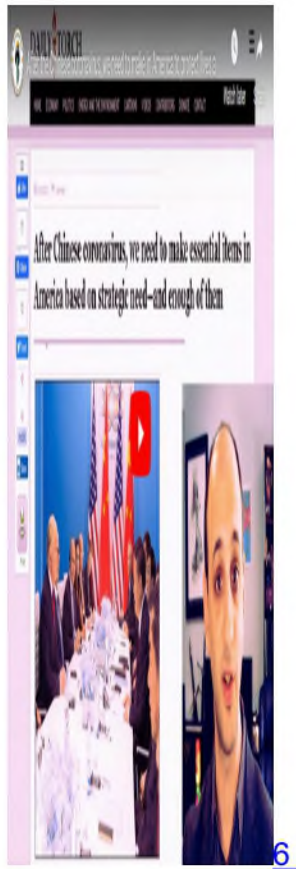
"One of the big things that's really been hurting us is... a loss of productivity because of the shelter-in-place rules... We're a B2B business, and that really hurts our ability for sales and onboarding, acquiring new customers, getting... them all set up... We're one of the few exempted companies to still be able to work... but it really doesn't help us when... all of the clients that we serve are businesses that are

closed... We've got enough in reserves right now to last a little bit over a month..."

In the past few weeks, we have seen more than 16 million people apply for unemployment benefits. Unfortunately, it is highly likely that next week's report on new unemployment benefit applications will show another increase. Unless policymakers wish to soon see millions of small businesses fold – and even more people unemployed – Americans must be allowed to return to work in short order.

Richard McCarty is the Director of Research at Americans for Limited Government Foundation.

Video: After the Chinese coronavirus, we need to make in America to protect lives and national security



To view online: https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=200566ab-7c517fd7-20055794-0cc47adc5fa2-40952a6658af232d&u=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9Ji_LMktDg

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Subject:	HHS COVID-19 Update, #1, 4-10-2020: \$30 Billion of CARES Act Provider Relief Funding
Date:	2020/04/10 09:44:46
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Dear Colleague:

Today we will have two updates. The first is focused on the release of the first tranche of the Provider Relief Fund, occurring today – just 10 working days after the signing of the CARES Act. This afternoon will be the usual round up on all HHS activity.

Beginning today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is releasing delivery of the initial \$30 billion in relief funding to providers in support of the national response to COVID-19 as part of the distribution of the \$100 billion provider relief fund provided for in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act recently passed by Congress and signed by President Trump.

The \$100 billion of funding will be used to support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to coronavirus and to ensure uninsured Americans can get the testing and treatment they need without receiving a surprise bill from a provider. The initial \$30 billion in immediate relief funds will begin being delivered to providers today.

Recognizing the importance of delivering the provider relief funds in a fast, fair, and transparent manner, this initial broad-based distribution of the relief funds will go to hospitals and providers across the United States that are enrolled in Medicare. Facilities and providers are allotted a portion of the \$30 billion based on their share of 2019 Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursements. These are payments, not loans, to healthcare providers, and will not need to be repaid.

HHS and the Administration are working rapidly on additional targeted distributions to providers that will focus on providers in areas particularly impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, rural providers, and providers of services with lower shares of Medicare FFS reimbursement or who

predominantly serve the Medicaid population. This supplemental funding will also be used to reimburse providers for COVID-19 care for uninsured Americans.

HHS is partnering with UnitedHealth Group (UHG) to deliver the initial \$30 billion distribution to providers as quickly as possible. Providers will be paid via Automated Clearing House account information on file with UHG, UnitedHealthcare, or Optum Bank, or used for reimbursements from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Providers who normally receive a paper check for reimbursement from CMS will receive a paper check in the mail for this payment as well, within the next few weeks.

Within 30 days of receiving the payment, providers must sign an attestation confirming receipt of the funds and agreeing to the terms and conditions of payment. The portal for signing the attestation will be open the week of April 13, 2020 and will be linked from hhs.gov/providerrelief.

UnitedHealth Group will donate all fees for the administration of the CARES Act provider relief fund. Visit hhs.gov/providerrelief for additional information.

For those of you working primarily on your phones today, information found on hhs.gov/providerrelief currently includes:

CARES Act Provider Relief Fund

President Trump is providing support to healthcare providers fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 27, 2020, the President signed the bipartisan CARES legislation that provides \$100 billion in relief funds to hospitals and other healthcare providers on the front lines of the coronavirus response. This funding will be used to support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19 and to ensure uninsured Americans can get testing and treatment for COVID-19.

Immediate infusion of \$30 billion into healthcare system

Recognizing the importance of delivering funds in a fast and transparent manner, \$30 billion is being distributed immediately – with payments arriving via direct deposit beginning April 10, 2020 – to eligible providers throughout the American healthcare system. **These are payments, not loans, to healthcare providers, and will not need to be repaid.**

Who is eligible for initial \$30 billion

- All facilities and providers that received Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursements in 2019 are eligible for this initial rapid distribution.
- Payments to practices that are part of larger medical groups will be sent to the group's central billing office.
 - All relief payments are made to the billing organization according to its Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).
- As a condition to receiving these funds, providers must agree not to seek collection of out-of-pocket payments from a COVID-19 patient that are greater than what the patient would have otherwise been required to pay if the care had been provided by an in-network provider.
- This quick dispersal of funds will provide relief to both providers in areas heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and those providers who are struggling to

keep their doors open due to healthy patients delaying care and cancelled elective services.

How are payment distributions determined

- Providers will be distributed a portion of the initial \$30 billion based on their share of total Medicare FFS reimbursements in 2019. Total FFS payments were approximately \$484 billion in 2019.
- A provider can estimate their payment by dividing their 2019 Medicare FFS (not including Medicare Advantage) payments they received by \$484,000,000,000, and multiply that ratio by \$30,000,000,000. Providers can obtain their 2019 Medicare FFS billings from their organization's revenue management system.
- As an example: A community hospital billed Medicare FFS \$121 million in 2019. To determine how much they would receive, use this equation:
 - $\$121,000,000 / \$484,000,000,000 \times \$30,000,000,000 = \$7,500,000$

What to do if you are an eligible provider

- HHS has partnered with UnitedHealth Group (UHG) to provide rapid payment to providers eligible for the distribution of the initial \$30 billion in funds.
- Providers will be paid via Automated Clearing House account information on file with UHG or the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).
 - The automatic payments will come to providers via Optum Bank with "HHSPAYMENT" as the payment description.
 - Providers who normally receive a paper check for reimbursement from CMS, will receive a paper check in the mail for this payment as well, within the next few weeks.
- Within 30 days of receiving the payment, providers must sign an attestation confirming receipt of the funds and agreeing to the terms and conditions of payment. The portal for signing the attestation will be open the week of April 13, 2020, and will be linked on this page.
- HHS' payment of this initial tranche of funds is conditioned on the healthcare provider's acceptance of the [Terms and Conditions - PDF](#), which acceptance must occur within 30 days of receipt of payment. If a provider receives payment and does not wish to comply with these Terms and Conditions, the provider must do the following: contact HHS within 30 days of receipt of payment and then remit the full payment to HHS as instructed. Appropriate contact information will be provided soon.

Is this different than the CMS Accelerated and Advance Payment Program?

Yes. The CMS Accelerated and Advance Payment Program has delivered billions of dollars to healthcare providers to help ensure providers and suppliers have the resources needed to combat the pandemic. The CMS accelerated and advance payments are a loan that providers must pay back. For more information from CMS, [click here](#).

How this applies to different types of providers

All relief payments are being made to providers and according to their tax identification number (TIN). For example:

- *Large Organizations and Health Systems:* Large Organizations will receive relief payments for each of their billing TINs that bill Medicare. Each organization should look to the part of their organization that bills Medicare to identify details on Medicare payments for 2019 or to identify the accounts where they should expect relief payments.

- *Employed Physicians:* Employed physicians should not expect to receive an individual payment directly. The employer organization will receive the relief payment as the billing organization.
- *Physicians in a Group Practice:* Individual physicians and providers in a group practice are unlikely to receive individual payments directly, as the group practice will receive the relief fund payment as the billing organization. Providers should look to the part of their organization that bills Medicare to identify details on Medicare payments for 2019 or to identify the accounts where they should expect relief payments.
- *Solo Practitioners:* Solo practitioners who bill Medicare will receive a payment under the TIN used to bill Medicare.

Priorities for the remaining \$70 billion

The Administration is working rapidly on targeted distributions that will focus on providers in areas particularly impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, rural providers, providers of services with lower shares of Medicare reimbursement or who predominantly serve the Medicaid population, and providers requesting reimbursement for the treatment of uninsured Americans.

Ensuring Americans are not surprised by bills for COVID-19 medical expenses

The Trump Administration is committed to ensuring that Americans are protected against financial obstacles that might prevent them from getting the testing and treatment they need from COVID-19.

- As announced in early April, a portion of the \$100 billion Provider Relief Fund will be used to reimburse healthcare providers, at Medicare rates, for COVID-related treatment of the uninsured.
 - As a condition, providers are obligated to abstain from "balance billing" any patient for COVID-related treatment.
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act requires private insurers to cover an insurance plan member's cost-sharing payments for COVID-19 testing.
- President Trump has also secured commitments from private insurers, including Humana, Cigna, UnitedHealth Group, and the Blue Cross Blue Shield system to waive cost-sharing payments for treatment related to COVID-19 for plan members.

Finally, for those interested, attached is a state-by-state/territory breakdown of where the \$30 billion tranche is going.

Questions? Email Gary.Beck@HHS.gov.

Until this afternoon.

Laura

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State-by-State Breakdown:
Delivery of Initial \$30 Billion of CARES Act
Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund*

State or Territory	Number of Providers & Systems Paid	First Distribution Payments
AK	914	\$71,248,123
AL	4,652	\$449,481,945
AR	2,905	\$326,536,043
AS	2	\$766,575
AZ	6,017	\$707,587,482
CA	35,623	\$2,920,960,733
CO	4,696	\$360,905,482
CT	4,254	\$377,981,257
DC	596	\$84,989,099
DE	1,090	\$154,114,118
FL	21,808	\$2,220,563,137
GA	8,222	\$792,069,160
GU	76	\$8,216,556
HI	1,776	\$132,536,076
IA	3,264	\$297,929,171
ID	1,864	\$135,028,056
IL	12,609	\$1,204,103,180
IN	4,495	\$668,604,614
KS	3,320	\$325,135,950
KY	3,909	\$452,761,171
LA	4,944	\$474,891,735
MA	8,746	\$841,425,120
MD	6,215	\$742,225,306
ME	1,681	\$145,763,812
MI	11,383	\$936,700,139
MN	3,758	\$472,206,122
MO	5,252	\$618,601,167
MP	17	\$798,346
MS	2,755	\$374,847,790
MT	1,469	\$111,503,248

*Providers will be distributed a portion of the initial \$30 billion distribution based on their share of total Medicare fee-for-service reimbursements in 2019.

State-by-State Breakdown:
Delivery of Initial \$30 Billion of CARES Act
Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund*

State or Territory	Number of Providers & Systems Paid	First Distribution Payments
NC	6,905	\$919,171,087
ND	841	\$91,064,579
NE	2,359	\$225,027,912
NH	1,445	\$164,580,386
NJ	13,562	\$919,426,801
NM	1,763	\$169,486,132
NV	2,581	\$241,471,841
NY	26,282	\$1,859,574,434
OH	10,166	\$989,773,417
OK	4,125	\$489,853,998
OR	3,454	\$291,029,025
PA	12,661	\$1,246,250,076
PR	6,079	\$41,889,822
RI	1,302	\$90,459,834
SC	3,702	\$518,022,463
SD	935	\$107,650,201
TN	5,811	\$739,723,347
TX	24,307	\$2,089,066,452
UT	2,094	\$185,292,422
VA	6,271	\$814,360,467
VI	128	\$3,398,828
VT	1,011	\$54,457,870
WA	5,362	\$553,838,806
WI	4,120	\$471,681,077
WV	1,772	\$246,574,851
WY	818	\$66,393,163
TOTAL	318,168	\$30,000,000,000

*Providers will be distributed a portion of the initial \$30 billion distribution based on their share of total Medicare fee-for-service reimbursements in 2019.