

# Government-run Health Care: Editorials



America's editorial pages are catching on to the problems with government-run health care. Papers from *The Wall Street Journal* to *The Washington Post* are all coming out against the government-run plan.

But it's not just the big national papers. Smaller dailies are recognizing that in order to have real reform adding a government-run plan does not help. It only serves to undercut providers, force people from the coverage they like and add to the already too large national debt.

## Major Daily Newspapers on Government-run Health Care Proposals

- *The Washington Post* – “It is difficult to imagine a truly level playing field that would simultaneously produce benefits from a government-run system.”<sup>1</sup>
- *The Wall Street Journal* – “A public program won't compete in a way that any normal business would recognize.”<sup>2</sup>
- *Investor's Business Daily* – “The choice is between giving consumers a real market of competing insurers and steering them steadily toward single-payer.”<sup>3</sup>
- *The Washington Post* – “Insurers and private companies have been at least as innovative as the federal government in recent years in finding ways to provide quality care at lower costs.”<sup>4</sup>
- *The Wall Street Journal* – “This public option would be the most radical change in the way American health care is financed – and thus provided – in at least 44 years, and maybe ever.”<sup>5</sup>
- *Investor's Business Daily* – “That's the whole point: that unfair competition against private health insurance from a government entity — especially via the lure of artificially low premiums — will run much of the private health industry into the ground, put them out of business.”<sup>6</sup>
- *The Washington Post* – “Medicare keeps costs under control in part because of its 800-pound-gorilla capacity to dictate prices – in effect, to force the private sector to subsidize it. Such power, if exercised in a public health option, eventually would produce a single-payer system; if that's where the country wants to go, it should do so explicitly, not by default.”<sup>7</sup>
- *The Wall Street Journal* – “...[E]mployers small and large will have every incentive to dump their plans and transfer their workers to the public rolls.”<sup>8</sup>
- *The Washington Post* – “But it would be a huge mistake for the left to torpedo reform over this question.”<sup>9</sup>
- *The Wall Street Journal* – “Once government takes over the majority of U.S. health-care liabilities, it can either provide every service at huge and growing cost, or it can ration services.”<sup>10</sup>
- *Investor's Business Daily* – “Or you can think of the public plan as a Trojan horse. Once allowed inside the gates of the health insurance market and given an unfair advantage, it will eventually out-compete its private rivals and gain monopoly power.”<sup>11</sup>
- *The Chicago Tribune* – “But we do know a few things about government-run health plans... We know those plans pay bare-bones rates and yet still are busting the federal budget.”<sup>12</sup>



- *The Wall Street Journal* – “Medical innovation will be at the mercy of the price controls hashed out in Washington.”<sup>13</sup>
- *Investor’s Business Daily* – “As we said at the time, Obama’s plan is a blueprint for socialization in stages. It starts with a basically good idea – setting up a truly national market (which we don’t have now) for private insurance – and stacks the odds against the insurers by putting a tax-subsidized plan in the mix.”<sup>14</sup>
- *The Chicago Tribune* – “Costs clearly need to be controlled. But the Democrats’ solution to all this government excess is to create . . . another government-run health plan.”<sup>15</sup>
- *The Wall Street Journal* – “[The public plan] proposal would be open to everyone and necessitate a huge permanent increase in government spending as a share of the economy.”<sup>16</sup>
- *Investor’s Business Daily* – “Nowhere will government ‘meddling’ have more negative consequences for ordinary Americans than in this country’s health system — which, despite its very real flaws, is rightly renowned worldwide for excellence.”<sup>17</sup>
- *The Greeneville News* – “Creating another large-scale government-run plan would only result in more cost-shifting — higher health-care expenses for the average American.”<sup>18</sup>
- *The Chicago Tribune* – “...the federal government isn’t competition. It is the health care equivalent of Bigfoot, with so many Americans on its rolls that it dictates prices for doctors, drugs, and other benefits. It sets low prices, to be sure, lower than many insurers are able to match. But that just means those doctors and hospitals recoup the losses by shifting costs onto those with private insurance — amounting to an estimated \$89 billion a year...”<sup>19</sup>
- *The Chicago Tribune* – “As many as 119 million of the 172 million Americans who are privately insured would switch from private to public coverage if the public plan were similar to Medicare, according to a recent analysis by The Lewin Group, a health care consulting firm. That would be the end of private insurance as we know it.”<sup>20</sup>
- *The Oklahoman* – “Meanwhile, the plan would set up competition between private and public insurance, under market rules written by the government. It would be like a sports event where one of the contending teams also serves as referee.”<sup>21</sup>
- *The Greeneville News* – “Americans benefit most from a health-care marketplace with robust competition among private plans. A government-run plan should not be allowed to diminish that private choice and competition.”<sup>22</sup>
- *The Wall Street Journal* – “...a public option is the beginning of the end of private health insurance.”<sup>23</sup>
- *Investor’s Business Daily* - “President Obama and Congress’ plan to offer a government health plan would ultimately be a death warrant for private health insurance. The public must be alerted.”<sup>24</sup>
- *The Greeneville News* – “If Congress proceeds with reform, however, federal lawmakers should not seek to force out private-sector insurance coverage that works well for millions of Americans.”<sup>25</sup>
- *The Las Vegas Review-Journal* – “What President Obama is trying to do is to slip in a vastly expensive health care ‘reform’ that will lead inevitably to a government-run, socialized system for everyone – complete with rationing to decide who gets care and who does not, based on such factors as life expectancy and lifestyle choices (whether the patient deserves treatment for conditions resulting from smoking, drinking, riding a motorcycle, etc.) – while dressing up the scheme with lipstick and a wig to prevent anyone from pointing out there’s a pig under there.”<sup>26</sup>

Sources:

- <sup>1</sup> *The Washington Post*, “Reforming Health Care,” April 27, 2009.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, “The End of Private Health Insurance,” April 12, 2009.
- <sup>3</sup> *Investor’s Business Daily*, March 11, 2009.
- <sup>4</sup> *The Washington Post*, April 27, 2009.
- <sup>5</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> *Investor’s Business Daily*, “Unhealthy Plans,” April 30, 2009.



- <sup>7</sup> *The Washington Post*, April 27, 2009.
- <sup>8</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2009.
- <sup>9</sup> *The Washington Post*, April 27, 2009.
- <sup>10</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2009.
- <sup>11</sup> *Investor's Business Daily*, March 11, 2009.
- <sup>12</sup> *The Chicago Tribune*, "Hope and Experience," June 16, 2009.
- <sup>13</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2009.
- <sup>14</sup> *Investor's Business Daily*, "Trojan Horse Alert," March 11, 2009.
- <sup>15</sup> *The Chicago Tribune*, June 16, 2009.
- <sup>16</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2009.
- <sup>17</sup> *Investor's Business Daily*, April 30, 2009.
- <sup>18</sup> *The Greeneville News*, April 29, 2009.
- <sup>19</sup> *The Chicago Tribune*, June 16, 2009.
- <sup>20</sup> *The Chicago Tribune*, June 16, 2009.
- <sup>21</sup> *The Oklahoman*, "'Obama-care' warrants thorough public debate," November 27, 2008.
- <sup>22</sup> *The Greeneville News*, "Health-care reform: do no harm," April 29, 2009.
- <sup>23</sup> *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2009.
- <sup>24</sup> *Investor's Business Daily*, "Is Reform Possible?," April 7, 2009.
- <sup>25</sup> *The Greeneville News*, April 29, 2009.
- <sup>26</sup> *The Las Vegas Review-Journal*, "Extreme Makeover," June 19, 2009.

