



NEWS

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Will She Ever Learn? Hillary Tries to Re-Introduce Hillary-care!

When the government plays the role of doctor, will your health be run like the Post Office?

WASHINGTON – Congress is on the verge of passing historic legislation to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare for the nation's seniors. But Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) has introduced an amendment to the bill that reads like a blast from the past.

Her amendment would allow the creation of a major government program that would render judgment on the cost-effectiveness of drugs covered by Medicare. Though vaguely worded and ambiguous, her amendment could direct big government decisions on which medicines are available for seniors. Approval or disapproval could be dependent not on medical need but on cost.

“Sen. Clinton’s proposal is government meddling at its worst,” said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“The doctor-patient relationship is vital to quality care. It is the doctor’s responsibility to know his patient, and to prescribe the appropriate treatment for that specific individual. When a government bureaucrat can deny a prescription to a Medicaid recipient, because some chart tells him to, we are putting people’s lives at risk!”**

We have seen this proposal before:

Then:

(Section 1572) Council determinations shall be based on “cost effectiveness [of breakthrough drugs] relative to the cost of alternative course of treatment options...

(CLINTON Health Security Act of 1993)

Now:

AHRQ shall analyze “the comparative effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and... comparative safety of covered prescription drugs.”

(CLINTON Amendment, June 2003)

“Sen. Clinton’s proposal would deny the newest, most innovative drugs to our sick parents,” Norquist continued. **“It is, in effect, rationing of care by government bureaucrats. This will only lead to more costs down the road, as we substitute expensive hospitalization and surgery for drug therapy. Reformers should look to doctor and patient choice rather than government takeovers of medical decisions.”**

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org.