

## HEALTH

## Court Upholds Obama Health Law

(AP)—The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld virtually all of President Barack Obama's historic health care overhaul, including the hotly debated core requirement that nearly every American have health insurance.

The 5-4 decision meant the huge overhaul, still taking effect, could proceed and pick up momentum over the next several years, affecting the way that countless Americans receive and pay for their personal medical care.

The ruling hands Obama a campaign-season victory in rejecting arguments that Congress went too far in approving the plan. However, Republicans quickly indicated they will try to use the decision to rally their supporters against what they call "Obamacare," arguing that the ruling characterized the penalty against people who refuse to get insurance as a tax.

Breaking with the court's other conservative justices, Chief Justice John Roberts announced the judgment that allows the law to go forward with its aim of covering more than 30 million uninsured Americans. Roberts explained at length the court's view of the mandate as a valid exercise of Congress' authority to "lay and collect taxes." The administration estimates that roughly 4 million people will pay the penalty rather than buy insurance.

Even though Congress called it a penalty, not a tax, Roberts said, "The payment is collected solely by the IRS through the normal means of taxation."

The court found problems with the law's expansion of Medicaid, but even there said the expansion could proceed as long as the federal government does not threaten to withhold states' entire Medicaid allotment if they don't take part in the law's extension.



Supporters of President Barack Obama's health care law celebrate outside the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., Thursday, after the court's ruling in favor of the law. (AP photo)

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## Emergency Call for Blood Donors

The Red Cross blood supply has reached emergency levels with 50,000 fewer donations than expected in June.

The Red Cross is calling on all eligible donors to give blood as soon as possible. All blood types are needed, but especially O positive, O negative, B negative and A negative.

The need is constant. Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs a blood trans-

fusion. Blood and platelets are needed for many different reasons, including accident and burn victims, heart surgery patients, organ transplants, when there are complications during childbirth, and for patients receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer or sickle cell disease.

Call 1-800-REDCROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to make an appointment or for more information.

### HEALTHWATCH

Samaritan Hospital.

**Smoke-Free Support Group** -- Meets Mondays, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. For information, call 503-256-4000.

**Osteoporosis Screening** -- An ultrasound bone density screening with personalized education; fee \$30. To schedule an appointment, call 503-261-6611.

**Family Caregiver Support Group** -- This topic-oriented group offers a safe place to discuss the stresses, challenges and rewards of providing care to an older relative or friend. Meets the first Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. at Legacy Good

**Free Body Basics** -- This physician recommended class is appropriate for all ages and health conditions. Plan to attend this one-session class and learn the simple guidelines for safe exercises, including stretching. Call 503-256-4000 to register.

**Empowerment through Relaxation** -- Free informal meditation classes that address breathing techniques, some gentle ancient African yoga poses and mental balancing techniques. People have left these classes joyful and with a peaceful view of their lives. Call Dr. Marcelitte Failla at 503-228-6140.