



“Challenging People to Shape
a Better Future Now”

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Factchecking Fear of Obamacare

Major provisions of the Affordable Care Act go into effect on Tuesday and, like all new programs, there is a certain amount of uncertainty and confusion. But making things worse are the deliberate lies that have been told about what some call Obamacare.

To shift through the various charges, I turned to our friends at FactCheck.org for an independent, nonpartisan analysis. Here, in their words, is what they found:

Claim: 8.2 million Americans can't find full-time work partly due to Obamacare.

FactCheck.org says: False.

This assertion from the Republican National Committee echoes other conservative claims that the law is hindering part-timers from finding full-time jobs. But the RNC's 8.2 million figure was the total number in June of part-time workers in the U.S. seeking full-time work — what the Bureau of Labor Statistics calls 'part-time for economic reasons' — and there's no evidence from BLS numbers that the law has had an impact on such workers. There were more in this "part-time for economic reasons" category in March 2010, when the Affordable Care Act was signed into law (9.1 million). The latest figure, from August, is 7.9 million.

Claim: The law is a job-killer.

FactCheck.org says: Overblown.

It's true nonpartisan economic analyses have estimated a "small" loss of mainly low-wage jobs because of the law. But as one expert told us, there hasn't been much analysis of this impact of the



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law because, he believes, economists think the impact will be minimal. Still, Republicans have continued to push the idea that the law will have a significant effect on jobs. This claim made our "Whoppers of 2011" list, and it has continued to be pushed in various forms — with the latest being the claims about part-time work.

There's no guarantee that your employer won't switch plans

Claim: Premiums are going up because of the law. Premiums are going down because of the law.

FactCheck.org says: It depends.

Our short answer — "it depends" — may be unsatisfactory to readers, but whether you'll pay more or less than you would have without the law depends on your circumstances. Are you uninsured and have a preexisting condition? You'll likely pay less than you would have otherwise. Are you uninsured but young and

healthy? You'll likely pay more (without accounting for any subsidies you may receive). Are you insured through your employer? You likely won't see much change either way.

Claim: All of the uninsured will pay less on the exchanges than they could now on the individual market, even without federal subsidies.

FactCheck.org says: False.

President Obama made this claim at an Aug. 9 press conference, saying that beginning Oct. 1, the 15 percent of the population that's uninsured would be able to "sign up for affordable quality health insurance at a significantly cheaper rate than what they can get right now on the individual

Claim: You won't be able to choose your own doctor.

Claim: The government will be between you and your doctor.

FactCheck.org says: False.

These claims are variations on the fear that the government will be taking over health care — choosing your doctor, telling him or her what treatment to administer, etc. But the law doesn't create a government-run system, as we've said many times. It actually greatly expands business for private insurance, by about 12 million new customers, according to Congressional Budget Office estimates. And individuals will choose their own doctors, just as they do now.

Claim: If you like your plan, you can keep your plan. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.

FactCheck.org: Misleading.

Obama has repeatedly made this claim, and the White House continues to use the line on its website. The law doesn't force Americans to pick new plans or new doctors, but the president simply can't make this promise to everyone. There's no guarantee that your employer won't switch plans, just as companies could have done before the law. And if you switch jobs, your new work-based coverage might not have your doctor as an in-network provider, either.

Claim: Congress is exempt from the law.

FactCheck.org says: False.

Read the rest online at
www.theskanner.com



Republicans' Venom Aimed at Obama

At press time, it's unclear whether Congress would finally evade a government shutdown on Oct. 1. I do know, however, that I am sick of the budgetary brinkmanship that plagues our government. Every few months there is some crisis or another that has the House of Representatives and the White House at loggerheads. This time, Republicans in Congress want to defund Obamacare as part of the budget that must be passed and say they are willing to let government close to meet their goal. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid says that Republicans are holding a gun to the American people's heads and he isn't lying.

It doesn't stop on Oct. 1. The back-and-forth exists because Congress has not passed a budget the way it normally does since 2009. Now, government operates through a series of continuing resolutions that make it difficult for federal departments to know how much they have to spend. And if Congress passes an agreement to keep government open, it will only keep it open through November or Dec. 15, depending on which version (House or Senate) of the law passes.

Another upcoming deadline is the Oct. 17 deadline to raise the debt ceiling or further imperil our once-solid credit rating. In each instance, Republicans have another opportunity to crow about their



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fiscal mindedness and argue about Obamacare. But, as Harry Reid has said, Obamacare is the law of the land. It takes effect Oct. 1, government shutdown or not. The Republican House may despise Obamacare and they may change

The Republican House may despise Obamacare but they can't stop it now

some provisions of it, but they can't stop it now.

Indeed, Republicans are gearing up for the debt ceiling debate, which is another opportunity for brinkmanship. If they remove the Affordable Care Act from negotiations, it will surely resurface when the debt ceiling is discussed. We can spend the rest of this year, and part of next, with this budgetary brinkmanship, all driven by the fact that many Republicans simply

cannot stand the notion of the Affordable Care Act.

Actually, it's not just about the Affordable Care Act, it is about President Obama and Republican resistance to anything he proposes. Their attitudes go beyond partisanship to venomous distaste. You'd have to go back to find members of Congress so rude as to holler out "you lie" as a President spoke, assertions that that thing would happen "over my dead body" are far more common. It has always amused me when people so quickly offer their dead

millionaires. Last time there was a government shutdown, people were paid retroactively. This time, back pay is unlikely. With so many government employees experiencing pay cuts because of furloughs, an additional pay cut is onerous. Congress seems unconcerned with the plight of the average government worker.

The only good news in this mess is that the American people aren't stupid. Most of them blame gridlock on House Republicans. The last time government shut down in 1995-96 (when two shut downs lasted a combined 26 days), the people responded by giving President Bill Clinton a second term nine months later. Clinton defeated rival Bob Dole in part because of Dole's leadership in the government shutdown. With 2014 mid-term elections imminent, Republicans should be worried. When President Obama spoke at the Congressional Black Caucus dinner in late September, he asked people to gear up their activism for the 2014 elections. If the House of Representatives looked more like the Senate (or if more Republicans had good sense), perhaps we could avoid this constant budgetary brinkmanship that has plagued us for the past four years.

Julianne Malveaux is a Washington, D.C.-based economist and writer