

Coffman: Democrats reform too costly

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Congressional Democrats have begun a road show as part of an August offensive to save their sinking health care plan and on Aug. 1, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said as much, publicly commenting that this month Democrats need to “sell” their plan to the American people.

Lawmakers in Washington all commonly agree that our nation's health care system is in need of reform to change the unsustainable trajectory we're currently on. There is also agreement on the goals — improved quality of care, reduced costs, and increased access to care. Disappointingly, Democrats put forth a proposal that has left Americans with more questions than answers and does not achieve the reforms they espouse.

Speaker Pelosi will visit a number of cities including Denver to try and sure-up public support and even President Obama will be making a swing through western states.

Good ideas and good policies don't need selling. Bad ones do.

Democrats' attempt to legislate a taxpayer funded trillion dollar takeover of the nation's health care system is becoming increasingly transparent. The government taking over an industry that represents 18 percent of our economy is not the answer to our health care problems and Americans increasingly agree. According to new polls from the Wall Street Journal, National

Public Radio, and Pew, more Americans now oppose the Democrats' plan than support it.

Democrats are facing hard questions from their constituents at public forums across the country. Questions they don't have answers to. Like Republicans, fiscally conservative Democrats decry the trillion dollar cost of the current proposal. Heading in to August, Democrat authors of the current proposal have yet to definitively answer how their proposal will be paid for.

One potential provision is a crippling new mandate and tax on small businesses. As a former small business owner I always consider the impact that legislation will have on small businesses. The Democrats' plan would be immensely destructive.

Congress should be fostering economic growth and encouraging small businesses to provide health coverage through positive incentives but instead Democrats have chosen to mandate employers provide coverage or be penalized with a new 8 percent surtax. According to the economic model of President Obama's own chief economic advisor, Christina Roemer, business tax hikes alone would destroy up to 4.7 million jobs. Simply, small businesses will be forced to lay off employees to keep from shutting their doors.

The current proposal would be equally poisonous our nation's overall economic health by adding a trillion dollars to the national debt. On July 25, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office declared that the Democrats' plan would not yield any savings in its current form. Republicans have put a bright spotlight on Democrats reckless and unsustainable spending habits and this proposal is yet another stark example of their tax and spend behavior.

If the Democrats want to provide real reform for Americans in a sustainable way, they should heed their Republican colleagues' advice and provide fiscally responsible, market-based solutions.

House Republicans have offered reforms that won't saddle future generations with crushing debt such as expand access to care by providing tax incentives for individuals to purchase health care. Real reform should build on the current employer-based system by requiring insurers to cover individuals with pre-existing conditions and reduce costs through enabling small businesses to participate in group purchasing.

Not once have Democrats mentioned medical malpractice reform or defense medicine. We must enact medical malpractice reforms that will help curtail this costly practice.

We can all agree that our health care system needs reform, but a trillion dollar government takeover that raises taxes and only covers a small portion of those currently uninsured is not the solution.

The Democrats' proposal has failed to meet their rhetoric and now they're going to spend the month of August trying to sell the American people something we don't need at a price we can't

afford.

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