

# NEW BIRTH

Bishop Eddie L. Long  
Senior Pastor

## Health Care Reform

### Myth vs. FACT

**Myth:** *This bill would send an already out-of-control deficit through the roof and lead to uncontrolled spending.*

**FACT:** America's Affordable Health Choices Act is an expensive plan, but Congress has found ways to trim the federal budget and raise money to completely pay for this proposal without any deficit spending. Families making less than \$350,000 a year or individuals making less than \$280,000 a year will see no increase in taxes due to this plan. People making above those limits will pay a 1 to 5.4 percent surcharge, with the highest costs reaching those making over \$1 million annually. This approach allows the majority of Americans to get affordable health care for the tax dollars they already spend.

**Myth:** *If this bill passes, government bureaucrats will control decisions about your health care.*

**FACT:** This is completely false. This bill does NOT ration care. In fact, it returns decision-making back into the hands of your doctor and you. This bill actually provides you more freedom than the current system, where insurance companies can deny coverage, raise premiums, or delay care to patients regardless of the advice of their doctors. Only you and your doctor, not the government, will make decisions about your health.

**Myth:** *The bill promotes euthanasia by including a "death panel" that could "pull the plug on grandma" and choose how Americans will die.*

**FACT:** Completely false. When a patient is near death, there are important decisions that must be made. If patients can direct doctors' actions in advance, their right to make their own final decisions is preserved, even when they lose the ability to communicate their wishes. Advance directives actually free the patient from any kind of bureaucratic intervention in their last days. Even Georgia Senator Johnny Isakson agrees: "How someone could take an end of life directive or a living will as [euthanasia] is nuts. You're putting the authority in the individual rather than the government... It empowers you to be able to make decisions at a difficult time rather than having the government making them for you."

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**Myth:** *The bill includes damaging cuts to Medicare programs.*

**FACT:** Medicare will be strengthened by the America's Affordable Health Choices Act. Provisions in the bill help eliminate billions of dollars in wasteful Medicare overpayments to private plans, make reimbursements to doctors more fair, and creates new incentives for them to provide high-quality care. It will remove the "donut hole" that currently leaves many patients without prescription drug reimbursement. And it also reduces the increase in Medicare premiums over time.

**Myth:** *Everyone will be affected by the reform except Members of Congress and their families.*

**FACT:** Members of Congress' health care plans will be subject to the same rules as other employer-sponsored plans. Nothing in the legislation exempts the plans that are part of the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan.

**Myth:** *The bill will force people who are satisfied with their coverage to switch to a "government-run" plan and will eventually crowd out employer coverage.*

**FACT:** This bill does not replace employer-sponsored coverage, it actually adds to the choices people have. If people like their insurance, they can keep it. If they do not, right now they have no option. This bill would offer people another set of health care options to choose from. The Non-Partisan Congressional Budget Office analysis shows that America's Affordable Health Choices Act actually would increase the number of people with private health insurance through their employer over the next decade.

**Myth:** *The bill will hurt small businesses and eliminate jobs.*

**FACT:** Small businesses will save money. Most businesses will be exempt from employer requirements, including all small businesses with less than \$250,000 in payroll. There are negotiations underway to increase that amount to include small businesses with under \$500,000. Also, tax credits will be available to help the smallest businesses pay for up to 50% of health insurance premiums for their employees.

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**Myth:** *The bill will lead to socialized medicine and will subject citizens to the same problems Canadians and British citizens face with health care.*

**FACT:** Originally, socialized medicine actually referred to a health care system where the government owns and operates the hospitals and other medical institutions, and the doctors work for the government, like the British system. This bill does not propose anything of this kind. Doctors will still work for the same private institutions they do now. Treatment decisions will still be made by doctors and patients, not the government. And Canada and Great Britain have taken some offense at the misinterpretations of their system as these links reveal.

**Source:** from the Office of Congressman John Lewis

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