Origins of 'Obamacare' Revealed

By Editor Test   *Wed, Mar 2, 2011*

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ProCon.org, a prominent nonpartisan research organization, released its newest research project about the Republican origins of the individual health care mandate.

The concept of the individual health insurance mandate originated in 1989 at the conservative Heritage Foundation. In 1993, Republicans twice introduced health care bills that contained an individual health insurance mandate. Advocates for those bills included prominent Republicans who today oppose the mandate including Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Charles Grassley (R-IA), Robert Bennett (R-UT), and Christopher Bond (R-MO) among others. In 2007, Democrats and Republicans introduced a bi-partisan bill containing the mandate.

In 2008, then presidential candidate Barack Obama was opposed to the individual mandate. He said in a Feb. 28, 2008 interview on the *Ellen DeGeneres* show about his divergent views with Hillary Clinton:

"Both of us want to provide health care to all Americans. There's a slight difference, and her plan is a good one. But, she mandates that everybody buy health care. She'd have the government force every individual to buy insurance and I don't have such a mandate because I don't think the problem is that people don't want health insurance, it's that they can't afford it. So, I focus more on lowering costs. This is a modest difference. But, it's one that she's tried to elevate, arguing that because I don't force people to buy health care that I'm not insuring everybody. Well, if things were that easy, I could mandate everybody to buy a house, and that would solve the problem of homelessness. It doesn't."

By 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (HR 3590), sometimes referred to as "Obamacare," had passed in both the House and the Senate with no Republican votes. On Mar. 23, 2010 President Obama signed the act containing an individual mandate into law. On Jan. 5, 2011, Republicans in the US House of Representatives introduced The Repealing the Job-Killing Health Care Law Act (HR 2) to repeal the PPACA. One of their main arguments for repeal was that the health insurance mandate was unconstitutional.