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## Vandalism Follows Obama Health Bill Signing

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By Editor Test     *Thu, Mar 25, 2010*

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On Tuesday, President Obama signed H.R. 3590, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act bill, saying it will lead to “reforms that generations of Americans have fought for and marched for.”

On Wednesday, law enforcement officials reported that Democratic legislators had received death threats and been the victims of vandalism because of their votes in favor of the health care bill, according to *The New York Times*.

Meanwhile, the Senate parliamentarian has ruled informally that the “Cadillac health plan excise tax” provision in a second major health bill, the Reconciliation Act of 2010, complies with the rules governing budget reconciliation bills.

The House passed the Reconciliation Act, H.R. 4872, Sunday, but the Senate still must pass it before Obama can sign it into law. Several Democratic officials and lobbyists are predicting that Democrats can count on getting 52 votes for H.R. 4872. They are expecting the final vote to occur before the Senate leaves Friday for the two-week Easter recess.

Obama, who has often talked about the insurance struggles his own mother faced as she was dying of cancer, noted that some of the provisions in PPACA, particularly provisions affecting insurers, will take effect this year.

Republicans reacted angrily to the signing.

House Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio called the event something that “looked and sounded like a liberal Democratic pep rally” for “a massive government takeover of health care.”

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., told an Arizona radio station that Democrats should not expect any cooperation from Republicans in the Senate for the rest of the year, according to *The Hill*, a Washington newspaper.

Officials in Florida, Pennsylvania, Texas and 11 other states have filed a suit to block implementation of PPACA in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida. The states are objecting to provisions that require individuals to have health coverage and provisions that would require states to pay to expand Medicaid programs.

Tom Currey, president of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, Falls Church, Va., said NAIFA members “are pleased that Congress has recognized the positive role that health insurance agents can play in helping small businesses and individuals acquire appropriate health insurance plans.”

If PPACA takes effect as written, agents should still to be able to perform their traditional role, Currey said, adding that he likes a provision that would increase penalties for individuals who fail to have health coverage.

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