



# Democrat Panic Unabated

## *As Obama Celebrates ObamaCare, Democrats Continue To Run For Cover*

**Even As Obama Spikes The ObamaCare Football, Vulnerable Democrats Continue To Distance Themselves From The Law.** “But while Obama administration officials popped champagne to celebrate the enrollment figure, Democrats on the ballot this year continue to tread cautiously. Vulnerable incumbents who voted for the Affordable Care Act but have distanced themselves have no plans to suddenly embrace it. They plan to continue emphasizing the ways they want to ‘fix it’ and ‘make it work.’” (James Hohmann, “Vulnerable Democrats Still Wary Of ObamaCare,” [Politico](#), 4/1/14)

**On Tuesday, Endangered Red And Purple State Democrats Were Nowhere To Be Found As The White House Celebrated The Close Of The ObamaCare Enrollment Period.** “While the president celebrated the enrollment figures in a Rose Garden speech Tuesday afternoon, Democratic senators from red and purple states were not going out of their way to trumpet it. Half a dozen spokespeople for other endangered incumbents did not respond to requests for comments on the enrollment figure.” (James Hohmann, “Vulnerable Democrats Still Wary Of ObamaCare,” [Politico](#), 4/1/14)

## **OBAMACARE IS STILL UNPOPULAR, AND EVEN THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION DOESN'T EXPECT THAT TO CHANGE**

**According To The Latest Nationwide Quinnipiac Poll, Voters Oppose ObamaCare 55-41 Percent.** ([Quinnipiac University Poll](#), 1578 RV, MoE 2.5%, 3/26-31/14)

- **40 Percent Of Voters Are Less Likely To Vote For Candidates Who Support ObamaCare, Compared To 27 Percent Who Say They Are More Likely To Vote For These Candidates.** ([Quinnipiac University Poll](#), 1578 RV, MoE 2.5%, 3/26-31/14)

**NBC's Chuck Todd Reported That White House Aides Tell Him “The Number's Haven't Moved, And We Don't Think The Numbers Will Move.”** “The poll this week that showed support for Obamacare narrowly exceeding opposition? Yeah, the White House didn't buy it either. Chuck Todd explained this morning. ‘[White House aides] weren't flaunting it. You know, they said, ‘Well, there is the one poll,’ but they were careful to say, ‘You know what, in all honesty, the numbers haven't moved.’ You talk with the senior political aides, they're like, ‘We see the same thing you do, the numbers haven't moved, and we don't think the numbers will move,’ Todd said on ‘Morning Joe.’” (Tom Kludt, “The White House Doesn't Expect Obamacare To Get Popular Anytime Soon,” [TPM](#), 4/2/14)

- **Todd: “In Fact, I Had One Senior Political Aide Who's Been With The President For Nearly A Decade Say To Me, ‘You Know, We Think The Numbers On Health Care Won't Move Until**

**The President Leaves Office.”** (Tom Kludt, “The White House Doesn’t Expect Obamacare To Get Popular Anytime Soon,” [TPM](#), 4/2/14)

***One Democratic Pollster Put It Best: “The Less We’re Talking About ObamaCare, The Better Off We Are”***

**Prominent Democratic Pollster: Good ObamaCare News Will Not “Fundamentally Change The Playing Field.”** “Added a prominent Democratic pollster, ‘It is helpful but it’s not going to fundamentally change the playing field. The less we’re talking about ObamaCare, the better off we are. Since good things are now happening, we may be talking about it less and that’s a good thing.’” (James Hohmann, “Vulnerable Democrats Still Wary Of ObamaCare,” [Politico](#), 4/1/14)

- **Pollster: “The Less We’re Talking About Obamacare, The Better Off We Are.”** (James Hohmann, “Vulnerable Democrats Still Wary Of ObamaCare,” [Politico](#), 4/1/14)

**MORE BAD OBAMACARE NEWS IS COMING DOWN THE PIKE**

**According To New Data From Blue Cross Blue Shield, 15 To 20 Percent Of Its New ObamaCare Customers Haven’t Paid Their First Month’s Premiums.** “One of the biggest players in ObamaCare’s exchanges says 15 to 20 percent of its new customers aren’t paying their first premium—which means they’re not actually covered. The latest data come from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, whose members—known collectively as ‘Blues’ plans—are participating in the exchanges in almost every state.” (Sam Baker, “15-20 Percent Aren’t Paying ObamaCare Premiums, Insurer Says,” [National Journal](#), 4/2/14)

**The Trend Is Consistent With Other Insurer Payment Rates.** “The Blues’ experience is in line with anecdotal estimates from other insurance executives, who indicated earlier in the enrollment process that they received payments from about 80 percent of people who selected their plans.” (Sam Baker, “15-20 Percent Aren’t Paying ObamaCare Premiums, Insurer Says,” [National Journal](#), 4/2/14)

- **Aetna And Health Care Services Corp., Said In Mid-March That 20 Percent Of Their ObamaCare Customers Have Not Paid.** “Aetna and Health Care Services Corp., two of the country’s largest insurers, told POLITICO that through February, about 80 percent of their exchange customers had paid.” (Kyle Cheney, “So How Many Have Paid ACA Premiums?” [Politico](#), 3/13/14)
- **WellPoint And Blue Shield Of California Claimed That 15 Percent Had Not Paid By Mid-March.** “Officials from WellPoint and Blue Shield of California said about 85 percent of subscribers had submitted premiums.” (Kyle Cheney, “So How Many Have Paid ACA Premiums?” [Politico](#), 3/13/14)

**If The Payment Rate “Remains At 80 To 85 Percent,” Final ObamaCare Enrollment Numbers Would Be Between 5.7 To 6 Million People.** “If the nationwide payment rate, across all carriers, remains at 80 to 85 percent, the 7.1 million sign-ups Obama announced Tuesday would translate into somewhere between 5.7 and 6 million people who are actually covered.” (Sam Baker, “15-20 Percent Aren’t Paying ObamaCare Premiums, Insurer Says,” [National Journal](#), 4/2/14)

***Insurance Premiums Are Set To Spike For 2015***

**Health Insurers Are Expecting Higher Premiums In 2015.** “As the first ObamaCare enrollment period comes to a close, U.S. insurers are already anticipating the need to raise prices for 2015 and fear that it will put them at the center of the political blame game over President Barack Obama’s health care law.” (Caroline Humer and David Morgan, “U.S. Insurers Fear Backlash Over New ObamaCare Rate Increases,” [Reuters](#), 4/2/14)

**Many Insurers Anticipate Double-Digit Increase In Premiums As New ObamaCare Enrollees Have Skewed Older And Costlier.** “But insurers have already said that the first group of new enrollees under

Obamacare, as the law is widely known, represent a higher rate of older and costlier members than hoped. To keep their health plans from losing money in the coming years, many expect monthly premium rates to rise by double-digit percentages in some parts of the country.” (Caroline Humer and David Morgan, “U.S. Insurers Fear Backlash Over New ObamaCare Rate Increases,” [Reuters](#), 4/2/14)

- **Chet Burrell Of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield: “I Do Think That It’s Likely Premium Rate Shocks Are Coming.”** “‘I do think that it’s likely premium rate shocks are coming. I think they begin to make themselves at least partially known in 2015 and fully known in 2016,’ said Chet Burrell, chief executive officer of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield. ‘That will be different in different parts of the country. I don’t think it will be uniformly the same.’” (Caroline Humer and David Morgan, “U.S. Insurers Fear Backlash Over New ObamaCare Rate Increases,” [Reuters](#), 4/2/14)

**In Iowa, “Rates Are Expected To Rise 100 Percent” On The ObamaCare Exchange While Employer Sponsored Coverage Rates Are Set To Double.** “In Iowa, which hosts the first presidential caucus in the nation and has a competitive Senate race this year, rates are expected to rise 100 percent on the exchange and by double digits on the larger, employer-based market, according to a recent article in the Business Record.” (Elise Viebeck, “O-Care Premiums About To Skyrocket,” [The Hill’s Health Watch](#), 3/19/14)

- **The Official Expects Rates At His Company To Triple On The ObamaCare Exchange.** “The insurance official, who hails from a populous swing state, said his company expects to triple its rates next year on the ObamaCare exchange.” (Elise Viebeck, “O-Care Premiums About To Skyrocket,” [The Hill’s Health Watch](#), 3/19/14)

**“Areas Of The Country With Older, Sicker Or Smaller Populations Are Likely To Be Hit Hardest ...”** “Areas of the country with older, sicker or smaller populations are likely to be hit hardest, while others might not see substantial increases at all.” (Elise Viebeck, “O-Care Premiums About To Skyrocket,” [The Hill’s Health Watch](#), 3/19/14)

### ***Medicare Advantage Beneficiaries Also Face Rate Hikes Due To ObamaCare***

**Congressional Democrats Continue To Freak Out Over The Obama Administration’s Pending Cuts To Medicare Advantage.** “Three words strike fear into the hearts of this cycle’s most endangered House Democrats: Medicare Advantage cuts. In February, President Barack Obama’s administration proposed cutting from Medicare Advantage as part of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Republicans seized on the administration’s announcement and are now plotting to use it to hammer Democrats in the midterm elections this fall. Seven months from Election Day, angst over the program is pitting the Medicare Advantage’s vulnerable Democratic backers against the party’s more liberal members, many of whom hail from safe districts.” (Abby Livingston, “Democrats Facing Political Fallout On Medicare,” [Roll Call](#), 4/1/14)

**Obama’s Medicare Advantage Cuts Are Expected To Reduce Benefits Or Increase Premiums By \$35 To \$75 Per Member Per Month.** “The combined impact of the 2015 changes may result in benefit reductions and premium increases of \$35 to \$75 per member per month and/or plan exits from local markets. Many beneficiaries could lose access to MA plans and their approach to care, which has reduced the incidence of preventable hospitalizations and improved access to primary care, according to recent studies.” (Glenn Giese and Kelly Backes, “2015 Advance Notice: Changes To Medicare Advantage Payment Methodology And The Potential Effect On Medicare Advantage Organizations And Beneficiaries,” [Oliver Wyman](#), 2/27/14, p. 2)

- **Last Year, Insurers Simply Eliminated Entire Plans After Medicare Advantage Rates Were Cut By Six Percent.** “Another possibility for insurers is eliminating plans and withdrawing from certain markets. Many did that last year after the government cut rates by nearly 6 percent.” (Caroline Humer, “U.S. Health Insurers Brace For New Steep Medicare Cuts,” [Reuters](#), 2/20/14)

**Medicare's Actuaries Have Predicted That Medicare Advantage Enrollment Will Drop For The First Time Since 2004 Due To ObamaCare's Payment Cuts That Will "Cause Plans To Drop Out Or Reduce Benefits."** "About 15.9 million people, or about 30 percent of Medicare beneficiaries, are enrolled in Advantage plans this year, according to February data from the government. Next year may mark a turning point: Medicare's actuaries estimate that enrollment will decline for the first time since 2004 because payment cuts will cause plans to drop out or reduce benefits." (Alex Wayne and Caroline Chen, "Humana, UnitedHealth Face About 3.6% Advantage Rate Cuts," [Bloomberg](#), 2/21/14)

**"The Timing Couldn't Be Worse For Vulnerable Democrats" Since Seniors Will See The Rate Hikes Cause By Democrats' Medicare Advantage Cuts In October, One Month Before Heading To The Polls.** "The timing couldn't be worse for vulnerable Democrats, whose electoral fate continues to be tied to the president's landmark health care law. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the government department overseeing the payment rates, is scheduled to release its payment rate on April 7. But the political problem is that open enrollment for Medicare Advantage starts in October, as early voters head to the polls." (Abby Livingston, "Democrats Facing Political Fallout On Medicare," [Roll Call](#), 4/1/14)

## INDEPENDENT OBSERVERS AND EVEN DEMOCRATS AGREE: DISASTER LOOMS

**Top Democrat Pollster Celinda Lake: "I'm Worried This Could Be A Disaster."** (John Harwood, "Democrats Scramble to Stave Off Midterm Disaster," [The New York Times](#), 3/31/14)

**Political Prognosticator Nate Silver: The GOP Has A 60 Percent Chance Of Winning The Senate, Could Have A Really Big Win In 2014.** ABC'S JONATHAN KARL: "Republicans need six seats, what's the projection? How many are they going to pick up?" SILVER: "I'd say exactly six, but it's probably six plus or minus five." KARL: "That means they could pick up 11 seats." SILVER: "They could. Yeah." KARL: "What you're saying is a 60% chance that Republicans win the senate." SILVER: "Something like that. So you can kind of imagine a bell curve distribution sort of where this is the most likely outcome. This is what republicans need to take over. This is 51, right, for them. So you see probably 60% of the pie is colored in here." KARL: "Translation for the math impaired, Nate's projection is a 40% chance Democrats hold on, but a 60% chance the GOP wins, with a 30% shot they win big. Still a lot of time, but a pretty decent chance of a really big win." SILVER: "That's right." (ABC's [This Week](#) 3/23/14)

**The New York Times: "Democrats Scramble To Stave Off Midterm Disaster."** "If it were only President Obama's flagging poll numbers, the problem for Democrats of how to mobilize core supporters to vote this fall would be bad enough. Midterm elections for an unpopular president's party are almost always bleak. But it is not only that. The very structure of the 21st-century national Democratic coalition makes its November turnout predicament bad, perhaps historically so." (John Harwood, "Democrats Scramble To Stave Off Midterm Disaster," [The New York Times](#), 3/31/14)

**The Atlantic's Molly Ball: Democrats Acting Like "Chickens With Their Heads Cut Off," In Denial Over 2014.** "I am tracking the level of Democratic panic. There's a lot of 2010 déjà vu going around. They've just lost a high profile special election, they even got Scott Brown back to torment them. And there's a question about whether this is 2010 all over again and if so how do they deal with it. I think right now we're in the 'chickens with their heads cut off stage' of that process. There's a little bit of denial. A little bit of "no, ObamaCare's going to be great and we're going to run on it." (CNN's [State of the Union](#), 3/31/14)