



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 13, 2013

## House Republicans Pass Bill Delaying ObamaCare Subsidies

On Thursday, the U.S. House of Representatives [voted](#) mostly along party lines to ban new subsidies to help people purchase health insurance until the administration enacts a new verification system to ensure that benefits are offered only to those who qualify. The No Subsidies Without Verification Act has no chance of passing in the Democratic-controlled Senate. The 235 to 191 vote is the 41st by House Republicans targeting the healthcare law.



Five Democrats — Reps. John Barrow of Georgia, Daniel Lipinski of Illinois, Jim Matheson of Utah, Mike McIntyre of North Carolina, and Collin Peterson of Minnesota — joined Republicans in the vote.

The healthcare law asks applicants to estimate their family income for 2014. Republicans assert that there is not enough protection against fraud and that the regulations issued over the summer fail to adequately verify income, verification used to prove people are eligible for the subsidies. Without a proper system in place, ineligible people could be receiving tax credits at the expense of the taxpayers.

“This bill would protect American taxpayers from the staggering amount of fraud and abuse in Obamacare exchanges,” said Rep. Diane Black (R-Tenn.), the main sponsor of the bill.

As it stands, income estimates will be compared to tax and Social Security records. Any significant discrepancies will require additional checks involving information obtained from a credit rating agency. According to the administration, taxpayers receiving more subsidies than they were eligible for will be required to have to repay part or all of them when they file their income tax returns the following year.

But the Republican-led effort wants to nip any fraud before it happens. “You can’t go into a store, restaurant or gasoline station and pay on the honor system,” Ways and Means Health Subcommittee Chairman Kevin Brady said. “But the Obama administration has botched the law.... Taxpayer dollars will go out the door as individuals pinky-swear their income is accurate.”

Rep. Michael Burgess of Texas added, “Because fraud and abuse have been rampant in just about every program that is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, including Medicare and Medicaid, a certified verification system being in place prior to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act is critical.”

Democrats contested the notion that there is risk of fraud by asserting that subsidies are paid directly to insurance companies, not individuals, making it difficult for applicants to benefit from fraud.

Representative Frank Pallone of New Jersey asserted that the Republican bill fails to do what it sets out to do. “Your bill will do nothing but prevent millions of hard-working American families from gaining affordable health care coverage,” said Pallone.

Other Democrats contend that Republicans are merely staging the votes to showcase their opposition to the healthcare law. “These things are nothing, they’re not going to the Senate, they’re not being signed,



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they're absolutely symbolic and a waste of time," bemoaned Rep. Jared Polis (D-Colo.). "This is nothing going nowhere."

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) articulated similar sentiments. "This is part of a mean-spirited and short-sighted effort to sabotage the health care reform effort."

Republicans have cast 41 votes that focused on repealing, defunding, or reforming the healthcare law since it was passed in 2010, but the efforts have been largely unsuccessful.

"Delay, de-fund, repeal, replace. That is exactly what we want to do, because this law has become so amazingly unpopular with the American people," said Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.).

And the Republicans are moving forward with efforts to defund ObamaCare by postponing a vote on a [continuing resolution](#) that would fund the government.

Yahoo News [reported](#), "This week, House Republican leaders delayed voting on a bill to fund the government beyond the end of the month after some GOP lawmakers complained the measure didn't adequately withhold funding for the health care law. If the impasse persists, it could result in a partial government shutdown at the end of the month." Additionally, Republicans have offered to support increasing the federal debt limit if Democrats agree to a one-year delay in fully implementing the healthcare law.

As for No Subsidies Without Verification Act, most expect it to fail in the Senate, and in the small chance it happens to pass the Senate, President Obama has been counseled to veto the bill.



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