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Terrific: Obamacare Stripping Low-Income Americans of Preferred Coverage, Rationing Access to Care

Guy Benson

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CNN's putrid Obamacare numbers, which [we broke down](#) last week, could have been an outlier. They were not. [USA Today/Pew](#):

Opposition hits new highs: 53% disapprove of the health care law, the highest level since it was signed; 42% approve. By an even wider margin, intensity favors the opposition; 41% of those surveyed strongly disapprove while just 26% strongly approve. Fifty-three percent disapprove of Obama's handling of health care policy, an historic high. And Democrats have lost their traditional advantage on the issue. **For the first time in polling that stretches back more than two decades, Americans narrowly prefer Republicans in dealing with health care policy, 40%-39%.**

Before we move on to the next poll, [the write-up](#) by *USA Today's* Susan Page is a sight to behold. Her opening paragraph blames the law's unpopularity on Republicans, and the first quote she includes is from a Lefty wonk snottily comparing the GOP's "demonization" campaign to nullification in the pre-Civil War South. Subtle. Republicans' role in Obamacare has been to vote en masse against a bill that the American people did not want, and to continue to oppose a law that the public abhors. While we're [on that subject](#), over to you, NBC/WSJ poll:

A large number of Americans continue to adamantly oppose the nation's new health-care law and believe it will produce damaging results, according to a new NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll. Forty-four percent of respondents call the health-care law a bad idea, while 31 percent believe it's a good idea — virtually unchanged from July's NBC/WSJ survey. **By a 45 percent to 23 percent margin, Americans say it will have a negative impact on the country's health-care system rather than a positive one.**

Rounding things out is [Rasmussen](#):

Most voters still don't like the national health care law and expect it to increase, not reduce, health care costs. The latest Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey finds that 43% of Likely U.S. Voters share at least a somewhat favorable opinion of the health care law, but **53% view it unfavorably...The passion remains on the side of its opponents:** The new findings include 18% with a Very Favorable opinion of the law, but more than twice as many (38%) view it Very Unfavorably.

Why are these negative sentiments so entrenched? Democrats and their allies in the media are free to console themselves by ranting about the malignant Republican spin machine, or whatever, but the truth is that the law itself is [stirring doubts](#) and galvanizing opposition. A few weeks ago, I [highlighted](#) a report detailing how Obamacare's convoluted maze of mandates will hurt low-income workers. *McClatchy* follows up with an analysis of how the new law "imperils local medical programs for the poor" -- the very types of people the law was supposed to help. This is just [devastating](#):

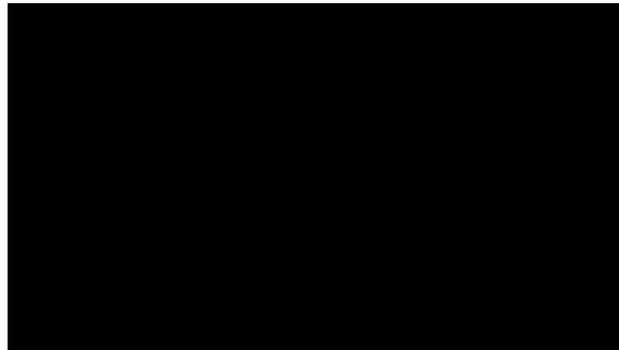
Jennifer Webb works the deli counter at Publix supermarket and has thyroid problems. Her boyfriend, William May, is an artist recovering from colon cancer. The couple has relied on a county program that provides health coverage to the working poor. **But their "security blanket," as Webb calls the Alachua County CHOICES program, is being taken away at the end of December. As new coverage provisions take effect Jan. 1 under the Affordable Care Act, the new health care law, local programs that offered barebones care to the uninsured are in flux – and with them, the lives of thousands who depend on them.** A few programs, like CHOICES and HealthShare in northern Minnesota, are shutting down. Others, such as the Appalachian Healthcare Project in Boone, N.C., and Vita Health in Palm Beach County, Fla., are scaling back the number of people they cover. Programs in Lansing, Mich., and Houston are continuing at least for now, but their future is uncertain. **As a result, many enrollees are unsure about how – or even if – they will be able to get coverage next year and what it will cost.**

"If you like your plan, you can keep it," the president [vowed](#). Except when you can't. Sorry about that, deli counter worker and artist recovering from cancer. One of the most arresting figures buried within [CNN's crosstabs](#) was the extremely anemic support for Obamacare among lower-income Americans. Perhaps they realize that this law is a raw deal for them, too. Meanwhile, some liberals are crowing about insurance premiums rising less than they might have in some states (which is still a far cry from the sharply reduced costs we were promised). How are some states holding intense rate shock somewhat at bay? By [significantly scaling back](#) access and choices for consumers. The *Los Angeles Times* reports:

The doctor can't see you now. Consumers may hear that a lot more often after getting health

insurance under President Obama's Affordable Care Act. To hold down premiums, **major insurers in California have sharply limited the number of doctors and hospitals available to patients in the state's new health insurance market** opening Oct. 1. New data reveal the extent of those cuts in California, a crucial test bed for the federal healthcare law. **These diminished medical networks are fueling growing concerns that many patients will still struggle to get care despite the nation's biggest healthcare expansion in half a century. Consumers could see long wait times, a scarcity of specialists and loss of a longtime doctor.** "These narrow networks won't work because they cut off access for patients," said Dr. Richard Baker, executive director of the Urban Health Institute at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles.

Health "coverage" does not equal *healthcare*. The *Examiner's* Phil Klein wrote about this form of rationing last week, dubbing it "[access shock](#)," and using New Hampshire as a prime example. I'll leave you with a news account of a troubling story I [mentioned](#) yesterday. As Obamacare rolls out, is your private data secure in the hands of an army of bureaucrats and their bug-plagued computer systems?



"They're investigating how this happened." Expect to hear a lot of that in the coming weeks.