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## **The Stouffer Report: Legislation Allows for Federal Healthcare Reform Opt-Out**

The federal government is in the process of trying to take over roughly 20 percent of the nation's economy through a power grab called "health care reform." Sadly, it is the portions of this massive undertaking that are NOT being reported that — to me — are the scariest.



For this reason, I am co-sponsoring a joint resolution in the Missouri Senate ([Senate Joint Resolution 25](#)) intended to prohibit laws from interfering with your freedom of choice in health care. This idea is being proposed in other states as well.

If you combine the bills in the [U.S. Senate](#), the [U.S. House](#) and all of the amendments between the two chambers, you will find thousands of pages of documents. All of the plans out there right now raise taxes on every one, not just "the rich."

Of course, most folks are employed by individuals and businesses that fit what politicians are currently calling "the rich." It is pretty hard to get a good, long-term job from someone with little income. The "rich," including small businesses, are the ones that will lead the economic recovery. They are the folks who provide the jobs.

The health care reforms being proposed will have an effect on small business owners, farmers and all taxpayers. But, the most important thing to keep in mind is, this is not about ensuring health care for every one. It could lead to the government dictating every aspect of our lives, from birth to death.

In examining costs to states, consider a recent article from [Reuters](#). Economically, California is doing worse than any other state in the nation. Any kind of government-run health care would hit them hardest. Unfortunately, it would

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not be much better for us in the Show-Me State.

[The Heritage Foundation](#) has written [in great detail](#) about the costs of so-called “reform.” Since there is no singular plan available, trying to determine what a federal health care system would cost our state is nearly impossible to calculate. However, I have talked with some of the folks in the Senate’s budget office, and they tell me it could cost Missouri more than \$200 million.

I am not sure a government takeover of anything is a good idea, with the deficit shooting to record highs every day. In addition, the uncertainty that abounds in the many significant changes being proposed on the federal level stifles business growth in the real world. I certainly do not think letting the federal government have 20 percent of our country’s gross domestic product is a wise move.

There are ideas out there that will work, one of which we passed and the governor signed into law in 2005 here in Missouri: Tort reform. Another is allowing insurance companies to compete across state lines. Reform does not have to happen in one huge step. Little by little we can all work together to enact reforms that build a plan that meets medical needs, sustains providers and honors taxpayers.

Our country is already in a recession. We are not seeing jobs being created. As Missouri lawmakers are preparing to return to Jefferson City, I am getting more concerned about the federal mandates being forced on us. I will continue to fight these bad ideas for as long as possible.

*Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll,  
Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray,  
Saline, and a part of Clay.*

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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