

Week of March 22, 2010



[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

Taking a Stand Against Federal Health Care Mandates

The health care legislation recently passed by the federal government is truly an unparalleled intrusion on an individual's right to choose their own health care and the states' rights to govern their citizens. This misguided attempt at reform will only raise taxes on hard-working, middle-class Missourians, increase health care costs, and add a great burden to our already cash-strapped state. We simply cannot afford it. When they say this bill is revenue-neutral, don't believe it for a second. It is revenue for the federal government, but costs will be borne by the states, costing us more than a \$100 million each year!

The passage of the federal bill not only dealt a tremendous blow to free market principles and individual freedom, but it placed an untold financial burden on the states and the American people. At an estimated cost of nearly \$1 trillion over a decade, the bill imposes mandates on individuals, forcing them to pay for health insurance or pay a fine; mandates on businesses to provide coverage for their employees or face a penalty; and mandates on the states to pay for Medicaid expansions—unprecedented acts that infringe on individual liberty and state sovereignty like never before.

Also, claims that this bill will eventually reduce the deficit are hard to believe when you look at how much government will grow in size and scope as a result of its passage. In the midst of one of the worst recessions in our nation's history, the federal government should be concerned with getting people back to work, reining in out-of-control spending and promoting economic development.

Like most other states, Missouri will not be able to shoulder the mandates required by this bill—and neither will Missourians. Our state is in the middle of a historic budget crisis, and difficult cuts to programs and services citizens already depend upon are inevitable to ensure that we have a balanced budget.

Just this week, we have been discussing ideas for “Rebooting Government,” which involves our state making do with less. While the provisions contained in the federal government’s bill will not be enacted overnight, I am concerned about the effect this legislation will have on Missouri 10, 15 years down the road. I have doubts we will be able to sustain a system that is built to grow without the necessary resources to support it.

Despite the bill’s overwhelming unpopularity, Congressional leaders and the administration in Washington were determined to pass this bill, disregarding the outcry of the states and the will of the people. Now that it has been signed into law by the President, many of us in the Missouri Legislature, like several of our counterparts in statehouses across the county, are gearing up to contest what many of us believe is the inherent unconstitutionality of the bill.

The 10th Amendment in the Bill of Rights reserves to the states all powers not specifically delegated to the federal government. The purpose for this protection was to ensure that most of the decisions affecting the day-to-day lives of Americans would be made by a government familiar with how to best serve its citizens. While the federal government was designed for certain functions, the Founding Fathers limited its scope of power. Unfortunately, since that time, the federal government has slowly infringed on state sovereignty—to the detriment of our democracy.

Here in Missouri, many of us in the Legislature have joined together to respond to the health care bill. This week we resumed Senate debate on [Senate Joint Resolution 25](#), known as the “Health Care Freedom Act.” The legislation is a proposed constitutional amendment that, if approved by Missouri voters, prohibits federal laws from interfering with freedom of choice in health care. Specifically, it says that no federal law can force a patient, employer, or health care provider to participate in any government or privately run health care system. I believe that Missourians deserve an opportunity to truly make their voices heard, and that they shouldn’t be forced to comply with a bill that was brokered through political deals in Washington.

As always, please feel free to contact me or my staff with any questions or concerns at any time. We look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions and trying to answer any questions you may have. You can reach us by phone at 866-277-0882 (toll-free) or 573-751-2272, or by fax at 573-526-7381.

Senator David Pearce serves Bates, Cass, Johnson and Vernon counties in the 31st State Senatorial District.

Contact Information

Capitol Office
State Capitol Building
Room 419
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Website:
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/pearce>

Phone Number:
866.277.0882 (toll-free)
573.751.2272

Fax:
573.526.7381