

A week after President Obama signed his health care reform bill into law, Americans still have serious misgivings about its impact on the country and their lives. National opinion polls bear out the public's disagreement with the president and the Democrat Congress, and views heard during my own recent visits across South Alabama echo that same sentiment.

A recent Rasmussen phone poll indicates 55 percent of Americans favor a repeal of the health care bill passed by Congress on March 21. Back home, as I visited with constituents and gave speeches this past week. I repeatedly heard concerns about the government health care mandate.

There is widespread anger over the federal government's snubbing of the opinion of the majority of Americans by imposing a vast government bureaucracy to oversee our personal health care decisions. They are not the only ones concerned about the high cost and inconvenience of the new health care program. Businesses are already weighing in about its crippling impact in an already bad economy.

Last week, major American companies, including Caterpillar, John Deere, and AT&T, reported they anticipated expenses of anywhere from \$100 million to \$1 billion in taxes and fees under the president's health care program. Add to that the president's signing of the reconciliation bill, which also includes a government takeover of the student loan program, and there is good reason for the public's anger at an administration that appears out of touch.

The new health care program will cost \$1.2 trillion over ten years and is projected to raise taxes by nearly \$570 billion. There are at least 12 tax increases in the new health care law that will affect families earning less than \$250,000 a year. This is despite President Obama's numerous public proclamations that his health care plan would not raise taxes on middle class families. Even more disturbing, it is projected that over 45 percent of families making less than \$66,150 a year would be forced to pay the health care program's individual mandate tax.

According to The Tax Foundation, a non profit group which monitors the practical implications of America's tax policy, "Tax Freedom Day" will arrive on April 9th. Tax Freedom Day is the day when Americans are finally working for themselves each year, after having earned enough money to pay their local, state and federal taxes. While this year's Tax Freedom Day is one day later than 2009, the implementation of the tax heavy health care program passed by Congress will likely extend it further in the years to come.

Many of you have contacted my office wanting to know what I plan to do to stop the new government health care law. I agree that voting against the president's health care bill is not enough. Accordingly, I am supporting legislation that will soon be introduced by several Republican members of Congress to repeal the health care bill, though the chances of this legislation becoming law under the current, Democrat-held Congress are a long shot.

Additionally, I support implementing an alternative health care reform plan that would use market incentives to bring about lower health care premiums for Americans and reduce the federal budget deficit by \$68 billion over ten years. This reform plan would not force people to buy insurance or take away their choice of health care. It would allow small businesses to pool

coverage; it would give consumers the ability to buy insurance across state lines; and, it would tackle the long-ignored problem of medical lawsuit abuse which drives up health care costs for everyone.

KC-X Tanker Competition:

Last week, the Defense Department announced it would extend the deadline for contractors to submit a bid on the new \$35 billion KC-X tanker program by 60 days. The extension was offered in response to a request from the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS), which is considering bidding in the tanker competition.

The contractor team of Northrop Grumman/EADS withdrew from the competition on March 8 in response to the Pentagon's RFP which contained requirements that clearly favored the smaller competing Boeing plane. EADS, which feels its plane and cost structure can be competitive, is considering re-entering the contest, possibly in concert with another partner.

Should it bid and win the new KC-X contract, EADS has said it will perform the aircraft assembly work in Mobile, as it had previously committed with its former partner, Northrop Grumman.

I am encouraged that EADS is considering offering a proposal and I urge the Defense Department to do everything necessary to preserve this vital competition. The American taxpayer and our warfighters alike will benefit from a fair and open competition.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.