

## Republican Perspective

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by Ed Manning

### INDEPENDENT AGENCY WILL CONTROL MEDICARE

*“It is amazing that people who think we cannot afford to pay for doctors, hospitals, and medication somehow think that we can afford to pay for doctors, hospitals, medication and a government bureaucracy to administer it.” Thomas Sowell*

Rossmoorians know the importance of quality healthcare as we continue our march into the Golden Years. Whether quality, timely healthcare will remain available is a concern that should not be taken lightly.

The London Telegraph recently reported that a group of academics has warned that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals discriminated against the elderly. The academics published an article in The Lancet saying that the UN goals to reduce premature mortality from cancer, stroke and dementia has the potential to undermine “cherished, fundamental principles of universality and health as a right for all”. The reason is that the goals only target deaths of people less than age 69. The Lancet is one of the world’s oldest independent medical journals.

The academics suggest that the unintended consequences of the UN’s goals are draining resources from services relative to older people and the mortality target will lead to age bias in healthcare decisions. Britain is already experiencing an increase of visits to hospital emergency rooms by “pensioners” in order to receive prompt attention.

Given the Democrats love of the UN and anything to do with “sustainability” as well as healthcare as a “right for all”, you might start thinking how to convince medical providers that you will never exceed age 69. Maybe there is an “app” for that.

But this can’t happen in the U.S. because we are covered by Medicare and the generousities of Obamacare. Think again, because Obamacare created a new government agency (yes, another one) called the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). Reporting on the IPAB has taken a back seat but like an itch that can’t be scratched, it remains troublesome.

IPAB is a panel of 15 unelected bureaucrats yet to be appointed by the president to serve two consecutive six-year terms. Obamacare does not require the IPAB to be bi-partisan, so a president can stack the board with members of his own party. The IPAB is truly independent; it is independent of the president, congress, judiciary and the will of the people. It is truly a progressive’s dream cementing their control over the commoners.

The IPAB's purpose is to adopt further cuts to Medicare to the extent necessary to keep Medicare spending within certain target limits. Just remember that it was your friendly, caring for the little guy, Democrats that passed future cuts to Medicare. (Don't you just long for a commercial showing a Republican throwing granny over the cliff?) The target for Medicare spending in 2018 will be the gross domestic product (GDP) plus one percentage point. IPAB's Medicare spending cuts automatically become law without congressional action, congressional approval, meaningful oversight or presidential veto! Substitution Game: What would the main stream media and Progressives say if such a law was passed only by Republicans calling for Medicare cuts?

The power given to this Board is un-American you cry. You believe we have a government based upon a Constitution that provides for checks and balances. You believe dictatorial power only exists in banana republics or under Putin. Like Stephan Curry of the Golden State Warriors, Progressives give the people an MVP head fake, then hit the three-pointer! Obamacare allows the IPAB to be repealed if a specifically worded "Joint Resolution" is offered in the House and Senate by January 1 and February 1, 2017 respectively. Should such a resolution be offered, it must then be passed by both bodies with a three-fifths vote of all members by August 15, 2017.

One bright note is that IPAB cannot reduce Medicare benefits or eligibility or cut hospital payments until 2020. This gives us plenty of time to make sure our illnesses and medical emergencies occur before midnight December 31, 2019. Don't wait too long.