

Good and bad in health care bill

After more than a year of debate in Washington, Pres. Obama signed the health care bill into law on Tuesday. The bill then went to the Senate for reconciliation where it passed on Thursday. It will now go back to the House for approval.

The bill has been hotly debated this week with Republicans claiming socialism has taken over and Democrats claiming gains for those who are uninsured.

The *New York Times* reported on the effects the health care bill would have on a range of people. If you pay for your own coverage or if you get insurance through an employer, you can either keep your plan or you can buy coverage through the state-run insurance exchanges starting in 2012.

If you are uninsured and have a preexisting condition, you can get coverage through a new high-risk pool in six months. In 2014 insurance companies can no longer refuse applicants with pre-existing health problems. Medicaid will be expanded to include families below 133 percent of the poverty level, \$29,327 in 2009 for a family of four. Uninsured people will be able to get coverage through the state exchanges in 2014.

Within six months several regulations will take effect. Insurance companies will no longer be able to put lifetime limits on coverage, cancel policy holders who get sick and they will have to allow children to stay on their parents' policies until they turn 26. Insurance companies will be able to deny coverage to adults with pre-existing conditions until 2014. Until then, people who have been denied due to a medical condition will be covered by a new high-risk pool. The pool will be created within six months.

There is no doubt there are many positive things in the bill, but there are also negatives. The most debated item is the cost. The bill is expected to cost \$1 trillion over 10 years, although the price may increase as more care is provided.

The other hotly debated item is the requirement that people be insured or face financial penalties. So far, 14 state attorneys general have said they will sue the federal government over that provision, claiming it is unconstitutional to require health insurance.

In Massachusetts, where universal health care has been in effect since 2005, residents are required to purchase insurance. If an employer doesn't offer coverage, a plan can be purchased through the state. Fines for being uninsured range with people being fined for not having insurance to companies being fined if they do not provide coverage to their employees.

The public option, which was eventually taken out of the federal bill, is available in Massachusetts and provides low-income people the ability to seek insurance.

After five years, Massachusetts is still in the experimental phases, making any claims about the federal bill seem premature. It will take years for the kinks to get worked out, but at least it is a step toward providing care to people who need it the most.

— Erica Bradley



To....the boys going to state wrestling this weekend in Topeka. Good luck!

To....Liza Deines. We enjoy your writing. Please keep it up! (Called in)

To....the Vet Clinic for the rabies clinic. (Called in)

To render a Thumbs Up write:

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Thank Kansas farmers

Campaign Trail

Sen. Tim Huelskamp

than anything in recent history. This legislation would cause massive energy tax increases and create huge job losses for our state and all of rural America.

I will resist an increasingly radical EPA: The EPA recently issued an "endangerment finding" classifying greenhouse gases, including methane and carbon dioxide as "harmful pollutants." This misguided power grab paves the way for additional regulation of key industries like agriculture, oil and gas, and manufacturing.

The EPA also wants to institute a zero-drift standard for pesticides, thus making it nearly impossible for farmers and ranchers to protect our crops from weeds, disease, and insect damage.

I will open up markets for Kansas farmers: Kansas farmers really do feed the world, and we need to make sure we can sell our products in markets like Brazil, Japan, Korea, and others around the world. I will continue to be a strong

advocate for this.

So again, if you're a Kansas farmer like me, thank you for all that you do. And if you know a Kansas farmer, thank them for helping feed our nation.

On The Campaign Trail:

It's been a busy week on the campaign trail with stops in Eskridge, Wamego, Clay Center, Washington, Junction City, and Osborne. Everywhere I go, voters are hungry for a solid conservative voice in Washington that they can count on to stand for principle and not waver.

The first big debate of our race was held in Junction City. It's amazing how much alike everyone sounds when they talk about the issues.

Rhetoric is one thing - what makes me different is the proven record I have of standing on conservative principles. It's a record of keeping taxes and spending low, protecting life and families, and making sure our Constitutional rights are respected. That's a record that I'll be proud to compare with any candidate in this race.

Stay tuned for more exciting news from the campaign trail!

State Sen. Tim Huelskamp

Forgiving without forgetting

Life is Good

Rita Speer

freed from his jail sentence. In other words, forgiveness does not mean one is not responsible for his deed, whether that means making restitution or serving jail time.

I have read stories of people who truly forgave a person who murdered a close family member, and I wonder if I could be so charitable.

For me, to forgive is to let go of whatever has happened; I no longer have the right to hold that act against the other person. That is how I would define true forgiveness. I believe we must be willing to forgive. Praying for one who has

wronged us is one way in which we can work through the feelings of betrayal and reach a place of forgiving. This works even if the other person does not ask for forgiveness. I pray for the other because I need to, not because the other necessarily needs the prayer. In addition, it sometimes takes a period of time to be able to truly forgive. It is fine to need time to forgive, just so long as one genuinely wants to forgive.

People glibly say, "Forgive and Forget." With some actions, it is impossible to forget. But I strongly believe we can forgive without forgetting. It just means that those wrongs no longer have the power to hurt us again.

When I am able to forgive or am open to forgiving, it is possible to live in peace and say, "Life is good."

Emotions running high

Phase II

Mary Kay Woodyard



Tuesday the health care reform act was signed into law by President Obama. I am sure looking over his shoulder were Ted Kennedy and Richard Nixon. Years ago the latter offered to push through legislation for universal health care and the then young and idealistic Kennedy felt it didn't go far enough. Let us pray we don't let fear and distrust hamper the initiation of this law. No one says it is perfect, but it is a beginning.

A mainstay of Christianity, for those who claim we are a Christian nation founded on Christian principles, sorry Ben and Tom just an example, is the story of the Good Samaritan. Do we or do we

I was 30 years old when I was diagnosed with rheumatoid disease. Jack had been a federal employee for four years, and we had opted for the high option health insurance. At such a young age it never occurred to me I would be faced with a serious illness, but it didn't take long, even back then, to realize how fortunate we were to have Jack's job and benefits.

Over the years I have counted myself incredibly blessed to have the option of good care, ability to purchase medications which adds up to hope when disease sometimes feels hopeless.

I'm not quite sure about our representatives in Washington. They are the recipients of one of the country's best health insurance plans and yet they fight to deny insurance access to 32 million U.S. citizens.

Perhaps it is part of their fundamentalist right belief in a supreme being, themselves. Do they deem those 32 million unworthy?