

# VIEWPOINTS

## Obamacare Ruling Is A Win For Conservatives

BY TINA DUPUY  
CagleCartoons.com

The dream of Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Bob Dole, Newt Gingrich and Mitt Romney has now been realized. Their solution — their idea for universal health care has been passed by both houses, signed by the president and upheld twice now by the Supreme Court. Yes, they call it Obamacare. Yes, they strangely call it socialism. But yes, it was their idea.

And now it's here to stay. Market-based mavens, you've got your way. Time for celebration! Also time to stop calling Obamacare a bill. It's a law now. It's been the law for four years. And it was always your law.

Passionately opposed to socialized medicine, President Reagan called for a mandatory health insurance program while governor of California. It was legislation that sounded, well, sound, but was never going to be law. It was the "abolish the Fed" position of its day.

But Reagan did supply socialized medicine to the poor. Prior to Reagan's presidency and his signing of the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA), people with no means to pay could be turned away at hospitals. EMTALA was an unfunded mandate that led to astronomical health care costs over the next few decades. People who couldn't afford insurance got health care in the ER and those who could afford insurance footed the bill. Which is, you know, socialism. The solution was to have an individual mandate to purchase private health insurance. But again, that was never going to pass.

In fact for over 40 years spanning seven presidents, American health care got worse and more expensive. At this same time other industrialized nations improved upon single payer models and hybrids of private and public models. Americans' health care system devolved into a have and have not parable: Best in the world if you have money, worse than you could imagine if you don't.

Politicians assured us we had the best health care system in the world. With a major asterisk. In 2000, the World Health Organization ranked us as 37th in the world (Colombia was 22nd). We paid more for less. An illness could cause bankruptcy. Our health system was very unhealthy.

But then came "change." In the original proposal by Obama, the Affordable Care Act included a public option, referred to as "Medicare you can buy into." This public option was wildly popular with doctors and supported generally by a majority of voters. It was a perfect way of creating competition in the market place, setting a bar for private insurance companies. It was also, as noted by its opponents, an easy transition into a single payer system, putting American health care on par with the rest of the industrialized world (and most emerging countries, too). But the public option died in the Senate, never making it into the final law.

The public option was dead. Now in this wake of this second Supreme Court decision upholding the existing compromised ACA law, the public option is cremated, buried and gone. There's no political will for Medicare for all. The allegedly super-liberal-commie plan is the twice-upheld-by-SCOTUS law of the land.

President Ulysses S. Grant recalled the moment he received the surrender letter from General Robert E. Lee and wrote in his memoir: "I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse."

Grant refers to slavery as the worst cause for which people have fought. Conservatives vehemently fighting against their own idea—with no actual plan for its replacement other than the exact same plan with a different name—has to be the lamest cause for which people have fought. It's time to stop that now.

The battle is over. The public option will never happen. Take a victory lap, Republicans.

*Tina Dupuy is a nationally syndicated op-ed columnist, investigative journalist, award-winning writer, stand-up comic, on-air commentator and wedge issue fan. Tina can be reached at tinadupuy@yahoo.com.*

STAR TRIBUNE CagleCartoons.com

SAT



## He Really Needed Me

BY PAULA DAMON

It's funny how the mind works, like the other evening when our son Joel called.

"Hey, Ma, I need your advice."

Of our three children, Joel's the only one who calls me "Ma."

My son needed me. His words rang sweetly in my ear like bells tolling at high noon, chiming from belfries, rising above rooftops and sailing over yonder meadows.

To me, it was exhilarating, like a grand band marching down Main Street with booming bass drums vibrating my inner core. He really needed me.

There are parents who wish their adult kids would quit bugging them and finally figure things out on their own. Not me.

Our kids are so fiercely independent, always have been, they rarely if ever admit they need help let alone ask for it.

Yet, my heart waits on the edge of hope for the time when one of our children might come to me for guidance — just a little bit to help them along the way.

Ah, what a wonderful gift that would be in return for the many life lessons I've had to learn.

So, you can imagine how my thoughts raced and chased after the ever so many huge decisions Joel could not make without my ancient wisdom. I was clearly floating on the honor and flattery of being called.



PAULA  
DAMON

In less than a minute, I had already figured out what pressing life-changing matters were concerning him: family, finances, relationships, work. It could have been any number of weighty subjects.

"Sounds good to me." I was sailing on the wings of feeling useful, once again.

Honestly, it really didn't matter what the problem was. I was ready.

"Yeah," he chuckled, "when was the last time I asked for advice. Doesn't happen very often does it, Ma?"

"No, I guess it doesn't," I reluctantly admitted trying to be light about it. "What's up?"

"Well, you know that food co-op I told you about?"

Right away, I began to rule out the big-ticket items. Joel continued, but all I could hear was the sound of my anticipation, wondering what would come next.

"Yup," I acknowledged.

"Well, we bought a bunch of rhubarb."

"Rhubarb." I immediately righted my expectations.

Okay, he was calling me about rhubarb, not anything to do with anything else, and I guess I was just fine with that.

When the kids were little, I spent all of my waking hours helping them, guiding them with every last detail of their existence. Their meals, their clothes, playtime, nap time, settling arguments, teaching manners, helping with homework.

All of that pretty much ended well before they went off to college. It's quite a jolt to the system, going from being the source of everything to being rendered useless.

And now, here was my 32-year-old son, my middle child seeking my truth, my input about what? Rhubarb.

Let me tell you; I rose to the occasion.

Joel continued. "I'm trying to make rhubarb crisp like yours, but the recipe I found on the internet doesn't look right."

"What does it call for?" I collected myself while searching for our tried and true Apple Betty recipe in my Better Crocker Cookbook, now a yellowed and dog-eared wedding gift from 43 years ago.

And so, with the enduring sleeves of our mother-son relationship rolled high, we volleyed back and forth the sugar, flour and spices.

At that point, even a total stranger could have detected the bond between us.

"I'm trying to recreate my childhood with this rhubarb here, Ma," he gladly admitted, while cutting a half-cup of butter into the dry ingredients. "You saved the day."

## Dying From A Broken Heart

BY RICHARD P. HOLM MD

It is interesting to learn about high-tech rescue treatment for people with coronary artery disease of the heart, but maybe we should emphasize more about what to do before the fact to avoid the disease in the first place. It is so true that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Certainly smoking leads the list but the other usual suspects for controllable causes of heart attack in-

clude: high blood pressure, diabetes, sleep apnea, and cholesterol; all of which are the consequences of a couch-potato life style. Try as we might to provide pills to counter all of those causes for accelerated aging of the blood vessels, still nothing holds a candle to less food and more exercise.

But there is a hidden risk that doesn't make the usual list. I'm talking about the psychological factors that are proven to bring on heart disease such as the type-a personality, hostility,

anger, anxiety, and depression. A recent study of more than 25,000 patients from 52 countries found that these psychological stressors were stronger risk factors for a heart attack than diabetes, smoking, hypertension, or obesity.

And recently we have discovered a new stress induced heart condition called Tako-Tsubo cardiomyopathy. It seems that after suffering great emotional loss, the heart will sometimes dilate to become the shape of a Japanese fishing pot. Although

this can kill, in general over time the heart can recover from this.

So in summary, we know that many factors can put our hearts at risk. We can and should try harder to avoid smoke, eat right, and exercise regularly. But how do we escape the anger and sadness of living in a stressful world? Perhaps we should laugh when we can, find the joy when its there, or else we truly could die of a broken heart.

### LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

The *Plain Talk* encourages its readers to write letters to the editor, and it asks that a few simple guidelines be followed.

Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the *Plain Talk* will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

Specific individuals or

entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters to the Editor, 201 W. Cherry St., Vermillion, SD 57069, drop off at 201 W. Cherry in Vermillion, fax to 624-4696 or e-mail to shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net.

## Your News!

Send your events and press releases to the Plain Talk at least two weeks before your event to have them run in the Plain Talk and Broadcaster.

201 W. Cherry St., Vermillion, SD 57069 or email them to Shauna at shauna.marlette@plaintalk.net.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

What is the deal with the city and being agreeable about egress windows in rental units?

What would be more disagreeable to me than having the city demand I waste \$15,000 to no one's advantage, or they will force closure on part of my livelihood? I will be disagreeable enough to say that the city is absolutely wrong on this issue and has used fear and guilt tactics to cover the lack of evidence to support its position. The city's position that there will be no compromise on "health and safety issues," means, of course, no compromise since everything is a "health and safety" issue.

The city says, for health and safety, that certain windows, built to code in initial construction, must be replaced with larger windows because the original windows now constitute an "imminent danger" to renters. An "imminent danger is a ... hazard that puts you at immediate serious risk of death or serious physical harm."

To my knowledge Vermillion has never had an injury or fatality attributed to egress windows. With a safety record like that, nearly 150 years without a blemish, rental property owners certainly deserve some recognition. I doubt they would feel this unwarranted,

unnecessary expense to be an appropriate honor. Common sense would seem to indicate that Vermillion should, like every other municipality in the state, grandfather in windows that met code at the time of their installation. With such a safety record, only extreme conditions would warrant a change. With zero fatalities, what reduction in numbers is predicted by the city?

Have the "improvements" in VFD equipment, personnel, training, added station houses, etc. really depleted their firefighting ability?

Given the inevitable and immediate nature of imminent danger, why has the city waited years to adopt this code? How can multiple year extensions be given for replacement, if there is a real unavoidable immediate danger in the present situation. Why are the windows I have, which have a no tool required removal system that allows total removal of both panels resulting in a clean opening twice the required size be judged inadequate?

Renters are adults and as such can choose where they live. Give the adults the same type of written warnings given for tobacco, and other proven dangers and let the adults make their choice. Private homes are not affected by the

new code changes. The infants and toddlers don't warrant protection in private homes?

Who benefits from the new windows? Answer, no one. This new change benefits no one, but it does adversely affect many. How does making housing more expensive make Vermillion grow and attendance at the University more attractive?

In the interest of transparency, and freedom of information, the city should present the "cost/benefit analysis" it used to arrive at its decision. If it can't, or won't, present its justification for the decision, the city should reverse its demands. It should reverse its decision regardless if their analysis is not persuasive.

An aside, I am sure it is a coincidence that the assessments for the two eight unit complexes, on which the city demands I waste \$15,000 dollars, increased their real estate assessment by over 74 percent in 2015. A jump like that will also increase rents. City demands mean less money for maintenance and renter desired amenities.

Fear the elephant.

**Horlowe G. Hatle  
Vermillion**



Vermillion

PLAIN  
TALK

Since 1884 • Official County, City and School District Newspaper

201 W. Cherry, Vermillion, SD 57069 • Publication No. USPS 657-720

Publisher: Gary Wood • General Manager/Managing Editor: Shauna Marlette

Published weekly by YANKTON MEDIA, Inc. • Periodicals postage paid at Vermillion, SD 57069.

Subscription rates for the *Plain Talk* by mail are \$27.56 a year in the city of Vermillion.

Subscriptions in Clay, Turner, Union and Yankton counties are \$41.34 per year.

Elsewhere in South Dakota, subscriptions are \$44.52, and out-of-state subscriptions are \$42.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Plain Talk, 201 West Cherry Street, Vermillion, SD 57069.

Vermillion Plain Talk Staff

**Advertising Director:** Michele Schievelbein

**Advertising Sales Rep:** Jackie Williams

**Composing Manager:** Kathy Larson

**Composing Staff:** Rob Buckingham,

Melissa Peterson

**Assistant News/Sports Editor:** Elyse Brightman

**Reception Office Manager:** Penny Aschman

**Distribution & Circulation Manager:**