

Universal Health Care

The genesis of universal health care is a noble one. It simply takes the law of the tribe - everyone is responsible for helping out everyone else or the tribe suffers - into the modern era. Whether that is considered socialism, or that it makes socialism a bad thing is not the issue.

The point to remember is whether that help is coerced or voluntary, there has never been a single instance of single-payer, state run health care that's ever been considered successful by the majority, anywhere.

For that reason alone, I wouldn't take the bet on it working this time around. The scale is simply too large - the 'tribe' too big.

But that doesn't make the idea or the vision any less noble. Put another way, just because I'm not a big fan of organized religion doesn't mean I don't believe in spirituality.

Perhaps most important though, I wouldn't want to deter a President from trying if he truly believes he can succeed. That's the definition of a leader - whether I agree with his odds of success or not.

In the end though, it's not unreasonable to think the richest country in the history of mankind should set aside some of its collective wealth to care for its poorest citizens. It's really all about priorities. After all, we think paying \$4 for a cup of coffee is somehow normal.

Far from foolish as some have implied, one might even consider it a moral imperative to have an available public healthcare option that keeps all the private plans honest (can you say, "pre-existing condition?"). My argument simply continues to be that I doubt any current government can pull it off for a country with 300 million citizens.

However, given the sheer goodness of collectively caring for our most needy, we should never stop trying to solve the problem.

I'm a fiscal republican. I believe in the private sector's ability to solve almost anything.

However, having personally paid insurance premiums to cover \$400 for a 4 years old's 10 minute "wellness checkup", an \$1100 ambulance ride to an emergency room 8 miles away and \$12,000 for a three day hospital stay that required no surgery...well, I'd have to say the private sector has failed miserably in this instance - unwittingly and inevitably opening the door for a debate on a public alternative. The healthcare/insurance industry only has itself to blame.