
OUR VIEW

Fight for Obamacare isn't quite over yet

Devin Rokyta, for Moscow-Pullman Daily News Editorial Board

Last week's 5-4 Supreme Court decision upholding the heart of President Barack Obama's health care law was an obvious victory for the American public, despite the fact that many on the right are unable, or unwilling, to admit it.

While some portions of the law, known as Obamacare, will not take effect for some time, the U.S.'s lagging health care industry can finally begin to make ground on the rest of the modern world in providing medical coverage to all of its citizens, not just the wealthiest of our society. Gone will be the days of insurance companies denying coverage because of a pre-existing condition or because a person has hit some so-called "lifetime limit."

As Obama said after the ruling, it "reaffirmed a fundamental principle: That here in America, in the wealthiest nation on earth, no illness or accident should lead to any family's financial ruin."

In the court's majority opinion, written by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., a George W. Bush appointee, the court concluded the most controversial part of the law - the individual mandate, a provision that was originally a conservative idea to promote personal responsibility by requiring everyone to buy a health insurance policy by 2014 or pay a penalty - was a permissible use of Congressional taxing power.

The ruling, however, did little to dissuade the GOP, which is ready to continue its offensive that has nothing to do with health care.

Even with the victory in the nation's highest court, the country and health care will still face mostly baseless attacks from states with Republican governors who refuse to implement any of the law, and other conservative leaders who have now turned their attention to labeling the bill as a tax hike. Not surprisingly, even Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney has joined the circus, already promising to kill the bill on his first day in office.

Despite all the benefits afforded by Obamacare, these constant attacks have made it impossible for many Americans to wade through the lies and misinformation.

Obamacare is by no means perfect legislation, but it's the first step in the right direction and certainly not the boogeyman the Republicans have made it out to be.