



The Daily Dish

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The [Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia found](#) that over 18 percent of businesses are cutting jobs and employees due to Obamacare. Within that same study, 88 percent of businesses that changed their health care plans due to Obamacare have passed on higher costs to employees. The troubling numbers are the latest of three reports out of Federal Reserve branches detailing the jobs impact of Obamacare. The trio of Federal Reserve branches all add up to one truth, the massive legislation is hurting the American worker.

[In more news on Obamacare](#), some have seen double digit hikes in their premium costs. The data, compiled on 29 states and the District of Columbia by PricewaterhouseCoopers, found that on average consumers saw a 8.9 percent rise in premiums. One state saw a 27 percent spike. This is a far cry from the \$2,500 per family reduction promised by the president while attempting to pass Obamacare.

Eakinomics: Back to School– Guest authored by Chad Miller, AAF Director of Education Policy

For the past couple of weeks, and for the next few, the nation's children will return to classrooms eager and ready to learn. The National Retail Federation projects that more than \$26.5 billion in back-to-school dollars will be spent- record breaking numbers. But for the over 50 million elementary and secondary public school students the headline reads glossy for some and gloomy for others.

The disparity between our nation's urban and suburban schools is a concern that policymakers have struggled to solve for the better part of thirty years. Take for instance one snapshot from the 2013 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). The results for 8th grade mathematics show that for urban students, 32 percent perform below basic, while 68 percent perform at or above that. For suburban students, 23 percent perform below basic, while 77 percent perform at or above that level. Chronic academic under-performance only hurts human potential and puts a drag on our economy.

The House has twice passed legislation to modernize and enhance federal charter school programs which would allow for dollars to flow to charter management organizations to expand and replicate their schools that have a proven record of success. The bill also levels the facilities funding gap between traditional and charter public schools. High performing charter schools have introduced an element of competition into our school systems that goes a long way towards improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps. The Senate hasn't yet followed suit.

But public charter schools alone can't change the system. State programs that allow students to attend private schools using vouchers or scholarships funded with tax credits are demonstrating performance gains based on competitive pressure on traditional public schools.

Smart policies to boost school competition and improve student performance are out there—if Congress takes steps to ensure that kids go back to schools that properly prepare them for success.