



The Daily Dish

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Next year the [ACA's 155 million paperwork hours and \\$42 billion in regulatory costs](#) will be [applied to all businesses with fewer than 100 employees](#). This could mean that more businesses could choose to go the “self-insurance” route and simply pay all health care costs for their employees. When President Obama’s “keep-your-plan” fix expires in 2017, many small businesses will have to change their current plans for more expensive “compliant” plans. The calculus is similar to AAF’s “[Young Invincibles](#)” study, finding that 6 out of 7 uninsured young adults have a financial benefit to pay the penalty and health care costs out of pocket in lieu of purchasing insurance.

A bill was introduced in the House that would block an EPA rule against strip mining. According to [The Hill](#), Rep. Alex Mooney’s “bill would stop Interior’s Office of Surface Mining from going forward with the rule for at least a year, stop it from using the Clean Water Act to justify the rule and require the agency to conduct a study into the industry impacts of the regulation.”

Eakinomics: Lessons of Bank of Bird-in-Hand

Yesterday the *Wall Street Journal* ran a compelling [story](#) about the Bank of Bird-in-Hand, an Amish country bank, the first new bank since the passage of the Dodd-Frank Act five years ago. One new bank (although regulators are nearing approval of a second). Stunning. The U.S. used to average 100 new banks every year.

It is ironic that the heavy [burden](#) of Dodd-Frank regulation is suffocating the entry of new competitive pressure into the banking system. U.S. Steel once stood abreast the industrial landscape, but was downsized by the entry of new and global competition. Ford once was the dominant auto manufacturer; no longer. International Business Machines once owned computing in the U.S. but that is a distant memory. The list could go on, but the lesson is the same: if you are worried about the role of large firms in an industry, encourage competition and have an efficient [bankruptcy regime](#) for when competitive pressures work their magic.

Dodd-Frank interferes with this beneficial dynamic, but that is because the progressive left believes in big government as the solution to all programs. Consider the budget amendment that Senator Sherrod Brown had prepared to offer during last week’s debate. It would have enabled legislation “...relating to any bank holding companies with over \$500,000,000,000 in total assets to better protect taxpayers, including such measures as capital or leverage requirements, restrictions on the growth, activities, or operations of a company, or divestiture of assets or operations of any company that is unable to present a credible plan to facilitate an orderly bankruptcy or resolution...”

Any such amendment hands the federal government the absolute authority to take over, run, sell, fold, spindle and mutilate a large bank. That is BIG government. But by draping it in the virtue of protecting the taxpayer, it attempts to turn bad policy into populist politics. In the end, however, the public is better served by hundreds of Birds-in-Hand.

From the Forum

[Conflicting Law: Affordable Care Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act](#) by Brittany La Couture, AAF Health Policy Counsel