



The Daily Dish

November 26th Edition

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Today the Obama Administration is expected to announce new ozone emissions regulations, one of the most expensive of his tenure. In 2011 the White House vetoed a proposed regulation on ozone emissions [partially in an effort](#) to “minimize regulatory costs and burdens, particularly in this economically challenging time.” According to the [New York Times](#), in 2011, “...Mr. Obama said the regulation would impose too severe a burden on industry and local governments at a time of economic distress.” At that time, the regulation would have cost \$90 billion.

The threat of a White House veto may have stalled hill talks on a possible tax extenders deal. According to the [Associated Press](#), “The unusual veto threat came before the parameters of a potential agreement were even revealed.” The tax extenders expired last year and have been awaiting congressional approval since.

Eakinomics: The Growth Imperative

I have written [previously](#) and at [length](#) about the need to focus on economic growth, but there is no more high-volume, self-assured advocate for any cause than New York Senator Chuck Schumer. In a breathtaking [speech](#), Schumer argued that Democrats “blew the opportunity the American people gave them.” He continued “We took their mandate and put all our focus on the wrong problem — health care reform.”

Obamacare *was* a mistake. Its toxic combination of \$2 trillion in new spending over the next decades, \$500 billion in new taxes, and burdensome regulations are stiflingly anti-growth. Since only 31 of the 60 Senate Democrats who voted for Obamacare remain, and Senator Schumer has implicitly lowered that to 30, there is the real chance that an effective, incentive-based health care system that rewards quality, controls spending, and offers affordable insurance options can emerge. Most importantly, with better incentives, it will not be necessary to stop economic progress to achieve health policy outcomes.

But in another respect, the mistake was *not* health care reform. Remember, as far back as the 2007 every Republican primary candidate had to have a health care reform. It was well-established on both sides of the partisan divide that the U.S. health care system needed reform. The mistake was the Democrats decision to produce a partisan reform — which voters remember and dislike — and to mislead Americans (“If you like your _____ (fill in the blank), you can keep it.”) to get it passed. Democrats rejected the option of pursuing genuinely bipartisan reform and are now reaping the harvest they sowed.

Senator Schumer closed by emphasizing the need to help the middle class. That is correct. Better growth *is* the imperative.

From the Forum

[Inside the Administration’s Fall 2014 Regulatory Agenda](#) by Sam Batkins, AAF Director of Regulatory Policy