The Daily Dish

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A new study from the Commonwealth Foundation finds that health care costs for the nation continue to rise with fewer results. The data from 2013, shows that the U.S. spent 17 percent of GDP on health care at $9,086 per person. While some policymakers continue to propose plans to expand Obamacare, the reality is even these proposals will lead to higher costs and more spending.

ICYMI: Implementing Washington, D.C.'s paid family leave legislation nationwide would cost between between $306.6 billion and $1.9 trillion per year. D.C.'s new proposed law would provide 16 weeks of paid family leave for every worker, however, the plan to pay for such a law falls woefully short. Click here to find out more.

The House held a hearing yesterday looking into the administration's new overtime rule. According to Rep. Tom Price, "Between the Affordable Care Act, between the limit to access to capital under Dodd-Frank, all these things are well intentioned, but they are significant constraints on small business." When AAF looked into the issue, research found that 69 percent of the workers impacted by Labor's rule already make over 3 times the poverty line.

Eakinomics: Lawyers, Guns and Money

Yesterday, former Secretary of State and current presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton released her proposals for "Wall Street reform." Candidate Clinton has long experience with Wall Street, is receiving plenty of campaign backing, from the financial services types, and has a knowledgable policy staff loaded with Washington insiders and expertise. However, she has a real political problem: the distrust of the progressive faction. Following the timeless advice of Warren Zevon, she's calling for lawyers, guns and money to solve her problem. A sampling:

Lawyers

- "Clinton would also reform our stock market rules to ensure equal access to markets and information, increase transparency, and minimize conflicts of interest." Clinton is in favor of puppies, kittens and sunshine.
- She would "close the Volcker Rule's hedge fund loophole" and "fully enforce the Volcker Rule." The Volcker rule was already very costly. It was also pointless as there is no evidence that risky, proprietary trading by large banks contributed at all to the financial crisis.
- "Curtail the overuse of deferred prosecution and non--?prosecution agreements." Lawyers watching the lawyers. Oh good.
- "Establish prosecutorial guidelines for deferred prosecution and non--?prosecution agreements to enhance transparency and accountability." And if they don't watch carefully, more rules.
- "Restrict SEC waivers when companies engage in repeated egregious conduct." And more rules.

Guns

- “That’s why Clinton would ensure that both individuals and corporations are held accountable when they break the law.”
- “Emphasize individual accountability when prosecuting corporate wrongdoing.”
- “Ensure that fines for major corporate wrongdoing hit the bonuses of culpable executives, supervisors, and employees—and that senior executives have their jobs on the line when egregious misconduct takes place on their watch.” Amazingly, Clinton proposes to give regulators the power to fire private employees (“require that senior executives leave their jobs”).
- “Prohibit individuals in financial services who are convicted of egregious crimes from future employment in the industry.” As if they did not already lose their licensing.
- “Extend the statute of limitations for major financial fraud.” Let’s keep re-litigating — literally — the financial crisis for another 5 years.

Money

- A new tax on “high frequency trading” involving “excessive levels of order cancellations” — with no definition of “high” or “excessive”. Watch your wallet.
- “Give prosecutors the resources they need to punish law--?breakers.” Is there any evidence that there has been too little money?
- “Clinton would make funding for the SEC and CFTC independent of annual appropriations in Congress.” More money, less accountability. What could go wrong?
- “Increase maximum penalties for SEC and CFTC enforcement actions.” After you've taken their jobs, make sure you take their money.

Stepping back, the real problem with the progressive policy framework is revealed by this quote (emphasis added): “Clinton understands that the strength of our economy and our financial markets depends on the strength of the rules that govern them.” Sadly, progressives believe that the government is the economy; regulation is the financial markets; and more lawyers, more penalties, and more taxpayer money is the route to success. The hardworking, innovative Americans who built the largest, most prosperous economic society in the history of the globe must be shaking their heads.

From the Forum

The Department of Energy: Under-the-Radar, Overly Burdensome by Sam Batkins, AAF Director of Regulatory Policy

Is NAFTA a Bad Deal? by Jacqueline Varas, AAF Data Analyst

Fact of the Day

The $38 billion in defense funding that is holding up the appropriations process represents less than 1 percent of the total FY16 budget.