

## **THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**

WSJ.com

OPINION MARCH 25, 2010, 7:46 P.M. ET

### [We Good Europeans](#)

For now, we better start adjusting to our new status as good Europeans.

By MITCH DANIELS

As if governors these days don't have enough on their plates. Now that ObamaCare has become law, there's a whole new to-do list for my state:

- 1) Plan for the termination of our Healthy Indiana Plan. This is the program that's currently providing health insurance to 50,000 low-income Hoosiers. With its health savings account-style personal accounts, it has been enormously popular among its participants. I hope those folks will do all right when they are pitched into Medicaid.
  
- 2) Start preparing voters for a state tax increase. The axe won't fall until someone else is governor. But when we are forced to expand Medicaid to one in every four citizens, the cost will add several hundred million dollars to the budget.
  
- 3) Check to see if Indiana should drop its health insurance plans and dump its government workers into the exchanges. Paying the new tax penalty might actually be cheaper for the state, as it will be for many private firms. I'm not certain the same rule applies to government as to business, but since no member of Congress read this entire bill before the vote, I don't feel embarrassed about not knowing.

4) Ramp up our job retraining programs to handle those who will be fired by our medical device companies, student loan providers, and small businesses as they wrestle with new taxes, penalties, or in the student loan case, outright nationalization of their business.

5) Call the state's attorney general to see if we can join one of the lawsuits to overturn ObamaCare. Yes, it's a long shot. But why not try?

6) Investigate an offset to all this extra cost. We may no longer need the Department of Insurance since insurers will now be operating as regulated utilities under the thumb of the federal government.

It's discouraging that all of this could have been avoided. Congress could have done what Republicans should suggest now: Shift to a system that allows individuals-not businesses-to buy health insurance tax free. They could also create tax credits for buying health insurance based on income and health status to guarantee everyone coverage and encourage medical care and insurance competition. Republicans should push to lower barriers for buying insurance across state lines, create incentives for states to repeal mandates, and limit frivolous lawsuits that increase the price of insurance.

But for the moment, our federal overlords have ruled. We better start adjusting to our new status as good Europeans.