

Nov 15

This is Phil Arnott for community comment on K INS radio.

There is a section in the Wall Street Journal called notable and quotable and I generally find it either amusing or downright insightful. In the most recent one that I read Joe Schoffstall wrote for the Washington free Beacon on July 17 the following:

a coalition of 10 organizations has filed an ethics complaint calling for an investigation into whether senators and their staff committed fraud when they submitted applications to the health insurance exchange in Washington DC.

The Council for citizens against Government waste led the coalition in filing the complaint to the Senate select committee on ethics. The organization involved is calling for an investigation into whether members of Congress and their staff violated laws by claiming to be a small business in order to buy their insurance and qualify for taxpayer funded subsidies.

The affordable care act or Obama care as we know it required that members of Congress and their staff <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>role</sup> in individual plans through the healthcare exchanges created by this law. As open enrollment approached in 2014, members and staff realized that by enrolling and as individuals they would no longer receive generous taxpayer-funded contributions to help pay their insurance premiums as they had for decades under the Federal employees health benefit program. They would instead only qualify for subsidies if their household income was less than 400% of the federal poverty level, just like millions of other Americans that had to purchase insurance in the individual market.

The group notes that senators worked with the White House and the office of personnel management for guidance on how to enroll in the small business health options program in order to skirt any obstacles. On October 2, 2013 the office of personnel and management used a federal regulation to deem Congress a small business despite its having more than 12,000 employees and dependents.

These shenanigans make me sick but do remind me of the former IRS employees that are fired for incompetence and then rehired. Some of these rehired people <sup>owe</sup> ~~and~~ up to \$48 million in income taxes. The response from IRS is that you cannot judge these people from their past record.

The heritage foundation is approaching this incompetence by clearly identifying those interests who seek to enrich themselves at public expense.

I leave you with a point to ponder: don't you think that we need more private groups like the heritage foundation and the reporter that wrote this article to identify government waste and fraud at the highest level

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