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CONTACT US

PHONE: (605) 665-7811 (800) 743-2968 NEWS FAX: (605) 665-1721 Advertising Fax: (605) 665-0288 WEBSITE: www.yankton.net **EMAIL ADDRESS:** news@vankton.net

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS Expand Medicaid Coverage In SD

ARGUS LEADER, Sioux Falls (Aug. 24): South Dakota should expand Medicaid coverage as intended under the federal Affordable Care Act.

The health care reform statute, passed in 2010, originally mandated that expansion, but the U.S. Supreme Court gave states the authority to make the final decision on coverage.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard decided against expansion last year, instead saying he wanted a committee to study the issue thoroughly and report back the advantages and disadvantages of making the move. That committee has wrapped up its work and is finalizing its report for Daugaard and the Legislature this month.

At stake is health care coverage for an estimated 48,000 nowuninsured South Dakotans. If the governor decides not to expand, 22,000 of those still would be able to buy coverage from the new federal exchange that should start up in 2014. The other 26,000 would not be eligible to buy from the exchange because they are too poor to qualify.

This topic has received ample debate here and in many states. Republican lawmakers at state and national levels have voiced their disapproval of the expansion and most other provisions of the health care reform act.

Under the statute, which, like it or not, is the law of the land, the federal government will pay the total cost of medical service to the new Medicaid-covered population for three years. After that, the proportions will shift until the federal government's payment is 90 percent by 2020.

There certainly are legitimate issues involved in this expansion. There will be some significant additional administrative cost — at least \$9.5 million, by some estimates. And there is genuine concern about the federal government's ability and desire to continue funding as spelled out past 2020.

However, these concerns should not stop us from expanding coverage to the working poor in our state now.

Medicaid costs are a perennial issue in the state Legislature. Increased Medicaid demands strained the state budget during the recession.

As a state, we traditionally have shied away from broadening eligibility beyond children, disabled and elderly residents. This expansion would fundamentally change our approach and bring working adults under Medicaid coverage. These working poor families, who are uninsured now, would be able to get regular health care coverage, meaning fewer emergency room visits, the cost of which is spread to insured individuals.

Public discussion and understanding of the issues involved here are important. The Legislature and the citizenry certainly should have the debate.

What we ultimately decide in South Dakota says something about us as a people. Is the decision on Medicaid expansion about improving the lives of many working poor families? Or is it about the dislike of the Obama health care reform act or a rejection of the notion of higher federal government involvement in our affairs?

We ask our Republican governor to do more than hold his nose and say yes here. We urge Daugaard to step beyond the political comfort zone to lead a reasoned discussion on this issue in the Legislature and across the state. He can do that.

To his credit, the task force he formed held widely publicized, open meetings to hear from citizens and to give affected institutions and agencies a chance to speak on the issue. He has promised their final report will be open to the public as well. We applaud the governor for that approach.

But, there are not likely to be any game-changing revelations in this group's final report. Most of the testimony at the public hearings followed familiar story lines.

Twenty-three states already have agreed to expand Medicaid, in-



Mirror, Mirror

BY KATHLEEN PARKER

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WASHINGTON — The president is up early, already showered and preparing to shave. Wiping steam from the mirror, he grimaces slightly at his image

Ŏbama: Good grief, I look old. So

much gray. Mirror: Aw, lighten up, Bo, it makes you look distinguished. You can't wage war without a few streaks of worry showing in your face and hair.

(Óbama hits his megawatt smile switch.)

Even my smile looks old. And by the way, Bo is the dog. I am Barack Obama. I am the president of the United States, leader of the free world

Keep telling yourself that, buddy, and maybe you'll be able to believe it. All the other presidents managed to. Buddy was also a dog. What's your

problem

Nothing, just trying to keep you grounded. So what's it going to be, Mr. Red Line? You going to go it alone?

What the hell?! What is wrong with David Cameron? I can't count on anybody! (Obama nicks his chin.) First, John Boehner can't get those tea party nitwits to do anything — *any-thing*! — and now the Brits won't go with me to Syria. Where's Tony Blair when you need him?! Probably making a pilgrimage someplace. Maybe I should become a Catholic, too. Then I can say, oops, I guess I was wrong, but, you know, I did what I thought was best.

I'm not sure Cardinal Dolan would go for that after you, ahem, misled him on the whole religious liberty thing. But, hey, at least you've got the French.

Ah oui. Assad must be terrified.

But, yeah, Blair and Bush didn't even have WMD. We at least know that Assad has chemical weapons and used them against his own people. You're stuck with those images, buddy. Oh, sorry. Have you heard from Colin?

Nooooooooo. (Chuckles.)

Maybe he could help.

I must be sick. Suddenly I want to talk to W, the poor slob. He got saddled with yellowcake. I'm voked to red line. Why are we always talking in primary colors? I feel like an idiot. I'm not a war president! I'm an end-the-war guy. I'm a drone striker, not a missile cruiser. I just wanted to heal the sick, help the poor and maybe shift a tide here and there. I feel like I'm going to throw up. All those kids. Oh my god. (A woman's voice penetrates the closed bath-

room door.) Michelle Obama: Barack, what are you doing

in there? Your steel-cut oatmeal is getting cold.

Did you want some fair-trade organic blackstrap molasses on that? Barack? Barack? OK then, I've got a mani in five. I'll just leave it on your dresser. Don't forget to take your Male Supreme tonic. And your bloodroot and burdock root. Oh, hey, Dawn! I didn't hear you come in. So I'm thinking blue shellac. Crazy, right?

President:

MehmehMEHmehmeh-meh. Mirror: Look, Mr. President, you're much too hard on yourself. Read your own lips: No good options. You probably shouldn't have drawn the red line, sure, but who knew Assad would go there? And by the way, let's enjoy a moment of irony, shall we?

Your Republican pals? You know, the ones who were in a swoon over shock and awe, suddenly they're the ones urging caution? Now they're the ones who want U.N. approval? Suddenly THEY need absolute proof that Assad used chemical weapons. Where was this skepticism when we invaded Iraq? Rich.

Well, if we learned anything from that fiasco, it's that no matter how noble our intentions going in, we can't control what happens the day after. And whatever worse is, worse will happen. It's that damned red line. Why can't I just say, look, all I said was there would be consequences and that Assad would be held accountable?

That doesn't mean I have to bomb Syria and possibly ignite a global war. Russia, Iran, Hezbollah — they'd love it. Better that I overstated a bluff than that I spill more blood and possibly enter into yet another endless war with people who will hate us no matter what. Without international support. ... Who knows where it will end?

But the children, Mr. President. Those images. The suffering. 100,000 dead. Your credibil-

I know. I know.

(Obama presses a towel to his chin and reaches for his cell, punching 1 on speed dial.) Hello, George? Got a minute?

Kathleen PARKER

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cluding North Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. In South Dakota, the state medical association, the hospital association and several social service organizations support the expansion.

This move will allow thousands of uninsured families to have their health care needs covered. Healthy families and fewer sick residents translate to happier homes and more productive workplaces. That's reason enough to act now.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press Today is Tuesday, Sept. 3, the 246th day of 2013. There are 119 days left in the year. Today's Highlight in History: On

September 3, 1943, Allied forces in-vaded Italy during World War II, the same day Italian officials signed a secret armistice with the Allies.

On this date: In 1189, England's King Richard I (the Lion-Hearted) was crowned in Westminster Abbey.

In 1658, Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of England, died in London; was succeeded by his son, Richard

In 1783, representatives of the United States and Britain signed the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the Revolutionary War.

In 1861, during the Civil War, Confederate forces invaded the border state of Kentucky, which had declared its neutrality in the conflict.

In 1868, the Japanese city of Edo was renamed Tokyo.

In 1923, the United States and Mexico resumed diplomatic relations. In 1939, Britain, France, Australia

and New Zealand declared war on Germany, two days after the Nazi in-vasion of Poland.

In 1951, the television soap opera "Search for Tomorrow" made its debut on CBS.

In 1967, Nguyen Van Thieu (nwen van too) was elected president of South Vietnam under a new constitution. Motorists in Sweden began driving on the right-hand side of the road instead of the left.

In 1972, American swimmer Mark Spitz won the sixth of his seven gold medals at the Munich Olympics as he placed first in the 100-meter freestyle.

In 1976, America's Viking 2 lander touched down on Mars to take the first close-up, color photographs of the planet's surface

In 1999, a French judge closed a two-year inquiry into the car crash that killed Princess Diana, dismissing all charges against nine photographers and a press motorcyclist, and concluding the accident was caused by an inebriated driver.

Ten years ago: Paul Hill, 49, a former minister who said he murdered an abortion doctor and his bodyguard to save the lives of unborn babies, was executed in Florida by injection,

FROM THE BIBLE

It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who lived me and gave Himself to me. Galatians 2:20. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

becoming the first person put to death in the United States for anti-abortion violence. President George W. Bush signed legislation to begin free trade with Singapore and Chile.

Five years ago: Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, John McCain's choice of running mate, roused delegates at the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn., as she belittled Democrat Barack Obama and praised her new boss. Thousands of New Orleans residents who had fled Hurricane Gustav forced the city to reluctantly open its doors, while President George W. Bush returned to the scene to show that the government had turned a corner since its bungled response to Katrina. Baseball's first use of instant replay backed an onfield call of a home run for Alex Rodriguez during the ninth inning of a New York Yankees game against the Tampa Bay Rays. (The Yankees won the game, 8-4.)

One year ago: President Barack Obama consoled victims of Hurricane Isaac along the Gulf Coast and stoked the enthusiasm of union voters in the industrial heartland, blending a hard political sell with a softer show of sympathy on the eve of the Democratic National Convention. Prolific character actor Michael Clarke Duncan, 54, died in Los Angeles. Sun Myung Moon, 92, a self-proclaimed messiah who founded the Unification Church, died in Gapeyeong, South Korea. Today's Birthdays: "Beetle Bai-

ley" cartoonist Mort Walker is 90. Actress Anne Jackson is 88. Actress Pauline Collins is 73. Rock singer-musician Al Jardine is 71. Actress Valerie Perrine is 70. Rock musician Donald Brewer (Grand Funk Railroad) is 65. Rock guitarist Steve Jones (The Sex Pistols) is 58. Actor Steve Schirripa is 56. Actor Holt McCallany is 49. Rock singer-musician Todd Lewis is 48. Actor Charlie Sheen is 48. Singer Jen-nifer Paige is 40. Dance-rock musician Redfoo (LMFAO) is 38. Actress Ashley Jones is 37. Actress Nichole Hiltz is 35. Actor Nick Wechsler is 35. Actor Garrett Hedlund is 29. Olympic gold medal snowboarder Shaun White is

Thought for Today: "It is impossible to persuade a man who does not disagree, but smiles." — Muriel Spark, Scottish author (1918-2006)

Creators Syndicate The singer Billy Ray Cyrus was supposed to be interviewed on television this week but he canceled. And who could blame

him? His daughter, Miley, embarrassed herself and her family on worldwide TV. Her narcissism on full display, the 20-year-old pop star simulated sexual activity with an older male singer while singing some kind of suggestive song. With millions of young people watching, the scene was as degrading as it was unnecessary.

As her father, Mr. Cyrus should be mortified by Miley's behavior. He's made no direct comment about it, but he should.

Generally speaking, there is an epidemic of bad parenting going on in America. The three teenage boys accused of murdering a young Australian man in Oklahoma were constantly in trouble, according to local authorities. After being apprehended, there were cries that they are "good kids." Bull. The overwhelming evidence is that they are thugs. A background check on their parents finds they are largely irresponsible and apathetic. One mother is even in prison.

In Spokane, Wash., two 16-year-old boys have been charged with beating a World War II veteran to death. The father of one of the accused killers told the press he doesn't understand how this could have happened. Then he admits he hadn't talked with the boy in weeks and that his grandmother essentially was raising him.

There is no question that American society is becoming increasingly callous and coarse, and

YOUR LETTERS

Wonderful Parade

Riverboat Days Parade Committee (Wayne and Jolene Williamson, Doug and Katie Feimer, Joy Ellis, Jeff and Connie Hines, Dale Maki, Leah Merkwan, Doug and Jenny Winstead, Adam and Abby Goeken, and Kevin and Marcia Watt.)

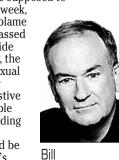
The 2013 Riverboat Days Parade was a total success. On Saturday morning the weather could not have been better and all the ingredients for a GREAT parade came together. We had 126 outstanding entries decorated as comic book heroes, the parade route was packed and there was an unbelievable effort by the people and businesses of the Yankton area.

Thank you to the many people that helped make the 30th annual parade a great event. The committee would like to thank the City of Yankton especially the police, parks and street departments, Kmart, Unclaimed Freight-Western Office, Abate, Yankton VFW Post 791 Honor Guard, Yankton High School Band, Dance Team

parker@washpost.com.

The Content Of Character

BY BILL O'REILLY



O'REILLY

part of the reason is that derelict moms and dads refuse to set boundaries for their children. Many parents are distracted and care more about themselves than their children, and the kids know it.

Some liberals want the government to replace bad parents by pouring billions of dollars into social programs that often wind up being babysitting services. This is a fool's errand. The government cannot overcome bad parenting. What our leaders can do is publicly condemn irresponsible parental behavior in vivid terms.

When was the last time you heard a powerful politician do that? The truth is, the powers that be are mostly afraid to mention the collapse of the traditional family, because secular-progressives attack any judgmental behavior on the part of a politician. According to

the secular left, unless a public person is a saint. he or she has no right to cast aspersions on any parental situation.

Sociologists well understand that chaos at home causes violent behavior, educational failure and social alienation among children. Yet, many of us in America stay far, far away from this topic.

That in and of itself is a national scandal. Bad parenting is gravely harming this nation. Let's get that out in the open. And the campaign should begin with the president of the United States.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show "The O'Reilly Factor" and author of the book "Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama.

and Cheerleaders. Parade Judges and Announcers.

It is rewarding to see Yankton and the surrounding communities come together to sponsor such a great family fun-filled weekend. We would like to thank all that watched and that entered the parade. The 2013 parade awards went to:

Commercial Division

1. Cedar County Vet Services. 2. Sparks Custom Upholstery. 3. Cork n Bottle

Vehicle Division

1. Robert Nissen. 2. Duke Ellingson. 3. The Country Peddler

- Non Profit Division
- 1. Blossom and Friends
- 2. Pheasants Forever
- 3. Yankton County 4-H
- 4. Yankton Area Ice Association
- 5. Southeast CASA Program
- A big Thanks goes out to all. We all look forward to the 2014 parade and hope to see you there.