Opinion: Calif. healthcare bill is financial folly

By Ted Gaines

Are you ready for California to double your taxes? What about triple or quadruple them? A bill currently making its way through the state Legislature could push tax rates up beyond imagination, making us tax serfs to the state, and driving hundreds of thousands of jobs out of California.

Senate Bill 562, the California Healthcare for All Act, proposes to ban private insurance coverage and force every citizen in the state into the equivalent of the Medi-Cal system we provide for the poor and disabled, where state-provided healthcare would be the only option. The costs would be staggering.

Ted Gaines

A recent analysis by the California Senate Appropriations Committee estimated that implementing SB562 would set back California taxpayers $400 billion. This year’s General Fund spending – including roads, schools, universities, prisons and more – is estimated around $124 billion. In a highly-taxed state that just recovered from years of massive deficits and still teeters on the edge of fiscal ruin, where is this additional taxpayer money supposed to come from? Four hundred billion is more than $10,000 a year from every man, woman and child in the state. Do most California families have that kind of money laying around?

That extraordinary cost is consistent with estimates from other states and is the major reason that single-payer schemes have been voted down or abandoned before implementation. New York state is currently proposing its own SB562. In 2019, when New York’s plan would be active, the state expects to collect $82 billion in taxes, but would need another $91 billion to pay for its single-payer scheme. New York, as is the case with California, will more than double its overall revenue. See a trend?

And that $91 billion number might be charitable. An analysis by healthcare expert Avik Roy concluded that New York’s plan could cost $226 billion a year, nearly quadrupling the state’s current tax collections, just to pay for healthcare, not government’s other responsibilities. Roy estimates that the plan would jettison 175,000 jobs from the state, as “high-wage, high-value industries move to neighboring states” as a result. California, a much larger state, could shed hundreds of thousands of jobs under SB562’s crushing fiscal mandate.

California’s plan also proposes to pay for all care for all residents, regardless of whether they are in the state illegally, or whether they are here legally but just moved here to take advantage of the state’s “free” medical care. California, already the king of the tax dollar giveaway, would become the hot new destination for immigrants and indigents seeking care, driving the costs even higher.

And, even if the costs were not fantastically, impossibly high, SB562 presents other problems for California healthcare. Our state suffers from a shortage of healthcare providers, particularly in rural and inner-city areas, a condition that would only be intensified by the provider rate caps in the bill.

Single-payer systems are also prone to deadly wait times since they ration care to reduce costs.

The United States is a medical innovator and California is the nation’s bioscience hub. That will disappear in the price-controlled, socialized system California legislators are trying to dump on the people. Price caps, a key component of single payer plans, spell doom to medical innovation.

Remaking the entire healthcare system is a terrible idea if the reform is going to make healthcare slower, less innovative, and wildly more expensive.

SB562 is an ill-advised plan with unpayable costs that would make California taxpayers sick.

Ted Gaines represents the 1st Senate District, which includes all or parts of Alpine, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra and Siskiyou counties.

South Lake Tahoe releases VHR study

South Lake Tahoe on June 5 released the Vacation Home Rental Socioeconomic Impact report completed by Michael Baker International.

The city paid for the study in order to identify emerging impacts, particularly impacts that may be directly affecting residents and people who work in the city. The goal was to examine the range of factors that may be influenced by the growth of the sharing economy, and evaluate the socioeconomic impacts of those factors.

The City Council will have a special workshop June 13 at 9am at Lake Tahoe Airport for the consulting team to make a presentation and summarize the report, and go over policies they suggest.

The report is available **online**.

---

6 months into Calif.'s bag ban habits are shifting

By Sarah Moore, KXTV

Six months into California's plastic bag ban, a cultural shift has taken place.

The ubiquitous "paper or plastic" has been replaced with "Do you need a bag for that?" or, more to the point, "Do you want to buy a bag for that?"

It might seem insignificant, but it represents a somewhat different attitude with respect to customer service and use of resources.

Read the whole story

Youth dominate tennis courts

at Zephyr Cove

Zephyr Cove Tennis Club pro Dave Nostrant teaches Dylan Bradley how to serve. Photo/ZCTC

It was a little noisier than usual at Zephyr Cove Tennis Club on June 3 as two dozen youngsters took over the courts.

From bouncing the ball with a racket to master control, to zinger serves and everything in between, the kids were all more proficient by the time the event was over. Some of the 4- to 12-year-olds were new to the sport, while others clearly had held a racket before.

Instruction was under the direction of Dave Nostrant, the first year pro at ZCTC. He has been teaching for more than 30 years.

This free two-hour session was co-sponsored by Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department and the nonprofit Zephyr Cove Tennis Club Foundation.

Nostrant will be conducting three clinics for ages 4-12 this month and in July. For more information or to register, go **online**. Cost ranges from $35-$75. Private lessons are also available. Nostrant may be reached at 775.588.5533 or zctennisclub@gmail.com.

Gaming stocks outperforming tech in 2017

By Todd Prince, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Wall Street is placing its chips on Las Vegas.

Gaming industry stocks such as Wynn Resorts and MGM Resorts International have been on a roll this year amid solid revenue growth at home and on Macau. And the Raiders move to Las Vegas has helped draw investor attention to the city.

The Dow Jones U.S. Gaming Index is up 22.2 percent this year through Friday — triple the rise of the Dow Jones Industrial Average and surpassing the 21.5 percent gain for the Dow's red-hot technology index.

Read the whole story

K's Kitchen: Enchiladas with

quinoa

By Kathryn Reed

Healthy and enchiladas are not always two words that go together. This recipe changes that thinking.

The flavors of this recipe are outstanding.

One of the nice things about quinoa is that is freezes well. I've gotten into the habit of cooking up more than what I need for any given recipe and then freezing the rest. This allows me to speed up the process for the next recipe.

I used the five cheese Mexican blend that comes shredded.

Corn or flour tortillas will work. The number you need will depend on the size you use.

Leftovers freeze well.

Quinoa Sweet Potato Black Bean Enchiladas

1 C cooked quinoa

Tortillas

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

Oil

1 medium yellow onion, chopped

1 15 ounce can black beans, drained

¼ C-plus cilantro, chopped

10 ounce can red enchilada sauce

8 ounces cheese, shredded

16 ounce jar fire roasted salsa verde

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

If you don't have prepared quinoa, cook some according to directions.

Sauté onion and sweet potato in oil over medium heat until potato is soft. Add black beans and cilantro. Divide mixture evenly into tortillas.

Cover bottom of 9 x 13 pan with enchilada sauce.

Place filled tortillas into pan. Cover with cheese and salsa. Bake for 15 minutes or until cheese is melted.

Optional to serve with extra cilantro, guacamole or sour cream.

Snippets about Lake Tahoe

· Bona Fide Books in Meyers is offering a session for writers on how to successfully self-publish. It is designed to save authors months of research and expensive errors. It will be June 26, 6-9pm. Cost is $75. To sign up, go **online**.

· El Dorado County's proposed budget for 2017-18 is

online.

· The El Dorado County Mental Health Commission is seeking two members to fill vacancies. For questions, contact Jim Abram at 530.644.5505.

· Here are the El Dorado-Tahoe and Sierra roadwork schedules from Caltrans for the week.

· California's poet laureate Dana Gioia is on a mission to visit every county. He'll be in Alpine, El Dorado and Amador counties this month. Details are **online**.

Yacht club looking for new members

South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club's annual membership drive is June 11 at the clubhouse at the Tahoe Keys Marina.

The group is designed for people who love being on Lake Tahoe, have fun participating in a variety of activities and like to give back to the community. Boat ownership is not a requirement for membership.

Potential members are invited to the lunch to meet active members and learn more about our club.

The event is noon until 3pm.

Contact Carol Gerard at 530.542.2876 for more information. RSVP is preferred, but not required.

Battle brewing over national monuments

By Gary Martin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

WASHINGTON — A battle is brewing among activists across the political spectrum over a Trump administration review of recently established national monuments, including Gold Butte in Nevada, and a 1906 law that permits presidential protection of public lands.

In the most recent salvo, 71 environmental and natural resource lawyers sent a letter to the administration saying a White House executive order that authorized the review incorrectly implied that President Trump has the authority to rescind or modify national monuments created by previous presidents.

It does not, the lawyers insisted: “Congress retained that power for itself.”

Read the whole story

Bill opposed by ride-sharing firms dies in Nev.

Legislature

By Sean Whaley, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY — An amended version of a bill that ride sharing companies Uber and Lyft said would run them out of business in Nevada is dead.

Senate Bill 226, which had language amended into it increasing insurance requirements for the independent contractors who work for the companies, won't move out of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Instead, the original version of SB226, which required evidence that drivers had obtained state business licenses, will go forward in a separate measure.

Read the whole story