Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom:
Obamacare Forcing Schools to Make Cuts

Obamacare’s 30-Hour Work Week Requirements Impact Students

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Millions of students around the country are returning to school today after a long holiday break. But some of them might see some changes this year in their school personnel—all thanks to Obamacare rules and regulations.

What’s causing the major math headache? Schools and other businesses are required to offer health insurance to part-time employees who work 30 or more hours per week. Otherwise, they can face federal fines of up to $2,000 per person starting in 2015. Therefore, some schools are scrambling to hire substitute teachers because they simply can’t afford the cost of offering health insurance, instead choosing to hire more employees who will work fewer hours.

Twila Brase, president and co-founder of Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom (CCHF, www.cchfreedom.org), a Minnesota-based national organization dedicated to preserving patient-centered health care and protecting patient and privacy rights, says in the end, it’s the students who suffer—all in the name of government health care.

“Obamacare is forcing America’s schools to choose between offering health care and quality education,” Brase said. “After a while, the cuts take over to save money, and the quality of education declines because school administrators must now pay such close attention to how many hours valuable part-time employees are working.”

According to a Reuters.com article, Indiana’s Fort Wayne Community Schools district, one of the state’s largest, was forced to cut hours for 610 of its 4,050 employees, including substitute teachers and support staff, who were working 30 or more hours a week. Providing them with health insurance would have cost $10 million annually, said a spokesperson.

According to a story in TheAdvocate.com, just before the holiday season began in November, one school in Louisiana reported that it is adding more substitute teachers to its roster because it can’t afford to pay health insurance to its regular part-time employees.
Similarly, the Ascension Parish school system is worried about violating regulations in the federal health care law, so it's hired a staffing agency to search for substitute teachers that can track hours and avoid the federal penalties. The nearby Lincoln Parish School District in northeast Louisiana has cut the weekly hours for 400 substitute teachers, maintenance workers, food service employees, paraprofessionals and other part-time workers to 28—two hours fewer than the minimum of 30.

School officials say the cost of providing benefits will be a huge drain on budgets that are already stretched paper-thin. Some schools are faced with the additional problem of finding much-needed qualified substitutes, then making sure they don’t exceed 30 hours per week. Good substitutes are hard to find, and when their hours are cut, it makes the pool even smaller, administrators say. Sometimes, the problem is solved temporarily by forcing full-time teachers into classrooms during their off periods, which are supposed to be set aside to prepare for their own classes and students.

“Pushing a federal health care plan with so many rules and regulations has far-reaching effects in every industry—even in how our children are educated,” Brase said. “And the inconsistencies each child faces can be detrimental. It’s a very real possibility that they may learn from one teacher Monday through Thursday, then another on Friday. Or just as they are forming a relationship with a school support staff member, they have to work with someone else because of government health care rules. In classrooms nationwide, Obamacare is forcing schools to expend financial resources to track hours instead of teach children—and that’s a lesson we can’t afford to learn the hard way.”

Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom is a patient-centered national health freedom organization based in St. Paul, Minn., that works to protect health care choices and patient privacy. CCHF sponsors the daily, 60-second radio feature, Health Freedom Minute, which airs on approximately 350 stations nationwide, including 200 on the American Family Radio Network and 100 on the Bott Radio Network. Listeners can learn more about the agenda behind health care initiatives and steps they can take to protect their health care choices, rights and privacy.

CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase, R.N., has been called one of the “100 Most Powerful People in Health Care” and one of “Minnesota’s 100 Most Influential Health Care Leaders.” A public health nurse, Brase has been interviewed by CNN, Fox News, Minnesota Public Radio, NBC Nightly News, NBC's Today Show, NPR, New York Public Radio, the Associated Press, Modern Healthcare, TIME, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Washington Times, among others. She is at the forefront of informing the public of crucial health issues, such as intrusive wellness and prevention initiatives in Obamacare, patient privacy, informed consent, the dangers of “evidence-based medicine” and the implications of state and federal health care reform.

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For more information or to interview Twila Brase, president and co-founder of Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom, contact Deborah Hamilton, Hamilton Strategies, 215.815.7716, 610.584.1096, DHamilton@HamiltonStrategies.com.