

POLITICAL CORRECTION

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GOP Senators Revive Malicious Distortion Of CBO's Health Care Calculations

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One day after the Congressional Budget Office informed Congress that Democratic proposals will create jobs much more effectively than conservative ideas — a conclusion that Republicans are guaranteed to ridicule or ignore — two GOP senators are relying on an old distortion of CBO calculations to argue that the Affordable Care Act is a job-killer. In a *Politico* op-ed today, Sens. John Barrasso (R-WY) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) write that the CBO "has testified that the new health law will result in the loss of more than 800,000 new jobs."

Prominent conservatives, including Reps. Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Michele Bachmann (R-MN), have been making the same claim since February even though it was outrageously deceitful in the first place. As the Associated Press explained, the GOP claim is "a story of how statistics get used and abused in Washington":



What follows is a story of how statistics get used and abused in Washington.

What CBO actually said is that the impact of the health care law on supply and demand for labor would be small. Most of it would come from people who no longer have to work, or can downshift to less demanding employment, because insurance will be available outside the job.

"The legislation, on net, will reduce the amount of labor used in the economy by a small amount -roughly half a percent — primarily by reducing the amount of labor that workers choose to supply," budget office number crunchers said in a report from last year.

The CBO judged that better access to health insurance as a result of the law would allow people to voluntarily retire or work less — that's a good thing, and a far cry from the mass firings that Barrasso and Hatch suggest will occur. *The Daily Shows* Jon Stewart mocked Republicans when they concocted their distortion, saying that the Affordable Care Act "is 'job-killing' in the sense that getting more sleep at night is 'awake-killing.'"

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