

Divided opinions on health care resurface after Supreme Court's decision

After the Supreme Court ruled on the federal government's health care overhaul law last week, arguments in favor and against universal health care resurfaced among experts, policymakers and op-ed columnists. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average annual cost of health care for the typical American family of four was \$22,356 in 2013. Yet, 47.9 million people (15.4% of the U.S. population) did not have health insurance in 2014. Currently, health care spending is financed by a mixture of households (28%), the federal government (26%), businesses (21%), state and local governments (18%), and other private sources (7%).

Proponents of universal health care say no one in the richest nation in the world should go without health care and that it is an internationally recognized human right. They argue that a right to health care would reduce American households' health care

spending, improve public health, benefit private business and increase workers' productivity. Because universal health care retains a free market of health provision, those in favor of the policy argue it will allow the private healthcare industry to thrive.

Opponents argue that it should be an individual's responsibility, not the government's role, to secure health care, and propose a system of personalized health coverage. They say that universal health care would increase taxes for most American households, decrease the quality of health care, increase the wait time for medical services, cause people to overuse or abuse health care resources, and lead to larger government debt and deficits. Lastly, opponents of universal health care argue that it will limit the market of private healthcare providers and, thus, threaten the existence of a private healthcare industry.