

By Rep. Steve King

American workers depend on this administration to protect their jobs from illegal workers by enforcing immigration laws and opposing amnesty. Instead, President Obama and liberals in Congress are determined to pursue a legislative agenda that benefits illegal immigrants at the expense of American workers and taxpayers.

In February, liberals on Capitol Hill muscled an expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program through Congress, making it easier for illegal immigrants to receive taxpayer-funded health care services. For Medicaid benefits, their SCHIP expansion eliminated citizenship verification requirements by substituting a new lower standard, simply requiring that a Social Security number be entered into the blanks on the form.

This was not an accident. It was a willful verification change to create an open door to Medicaid fraud and abuse by illegals. Simply telling a case worker a nine-digit number now constitutes "proof" of U.S. citizenship. The Congressional Budget Office estimated this change will cost taxpayers \$8.9 billion over 10 years.

Earlier this month, when asked about passing a comprehensive amnesty bill this year, Mr. Obama said, "Am I going to be able to snap my fingers and get this done? No. ... There are going to be demagogues out there who try to suggest that any form of pathway for legalization for those who are already in the United States is unacceptable." The president of the United States called the majority of Americans, those who support enforcement of our immigration laws and oppose amnesty, demagogues.

Mr. Obama's comments make it clear he is committed to an amnesty plan that will sacrifice the rule of law and cost American workers their jobs. Ramming a comprehensive amnesty bill through Congress against the wishes of the majority of the American people will benefit those in America illegally and those who hire them -- at the expense of more than 14 million unemployed Americans.

Illegal immigrants also will benefit from the health care scheme being pushed by Capitol Hill Democrats. According to the CBO, within 10 years, the non-Medicare population of the United States will include 14.1 million illegal immigrants. CBO projects that up to 8.5 million of the 14.1 million illegal immigrants will not have health insurance, meaning passage of Mr. Obama's policy will insure as many as

5.6 million illegal immigrants.

This is the result of Democrats blocking Republican efforts to require proof of citizenship. Their intent to insure illegals with our tax dollars is clear. Democrats are on record voting against the amendments that would preserve the proof-of-citizenship standard.

Yet Factcheck.org and liberal blogs have criticized my conclusion by pointing to language in the bill stating that illegal immigrants cannot receive health benefits. That language is purely a red herring -- technically accurate but functionally meaningless except as a diversion.

No Democratic bill contains verification mechanisms, such as proof of citizenship requirements, to ensure that illegal immigrants do not receive benefits. Democrats in two congressional committees defeated Republican amendments introduced to close this loophole.

Saying that illegal immigrants cannot benefit while at the same time blocking verification is akin to passing a law that sets the legal drinking age at 21 years and then preventing bars from checking a patron's identification. In other words; it will not work.

The Democrats' health care bills also suggest that if one member of a household is eligible for benefits (for example, a U.S.-born child of an illegal immigrant), everyone in that household will be considered eligible. This is significant: The Pew Hispanic Center estimated there are almost 2 million families in America with illegal immigrant parents and U.S.-born children.

With these significant loopholes - no verification and family eligibility -- illegal immigrants will benefit if liberals pass their government takeover of our health care system. This plan is just the latest in a series of liberal policies benefiting illegal immigrants and hurting American workers.

Next time, perhaps Factcheck.org and those who print their "opinions" will check with the author of the facts before they go to print.