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President Trump

A Future of the USA

Part II: Education and Healthcare

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As the days count down until Donald Trump takes his presidential oath on January 20th, a clearer picture continues to emerge of how he plans to put his campaign promises into action. Two policy areas in which there is still a level of ambiguity about Trump’s intentions are the issues of healthcare and education.

While Trump’s views on immigration and national security received the bulk of national attention, another central aspect of Trump’s election campaign was his relentless criticism of his predecessor, President Barack Obama, and one of his central achievements: the Affordable Care Act also known as Obamacare. Trump made it clear that his stance on healthcare centered around repealing Obamacare. Trump’s plans for education in America, although not discussed as much, have come into greater focus with his nomination of Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education. With the nomination, it seems likely that he will continue to advocate for more school choice.

Healthcare

Trump has stated several goals for his healthcare platform. Easily the most drastic of these is his call for a complete repeal of [Obamacare](#). Prior to his victory in the election, Trump cast Obamacare as an abject disaster that has “tragically but predictably resulted in runaway costs, websites that don’t work, greater rationing of care, higher premiums, less competition and fewer choices. Obamacare has raised the economic

uncertainty of every single person residing in this country.”

While he campaigned on the promise of repealing the entirety of Obamacare, it seems that since winning the election Trump has more fully realized just how complex the task of a complete repeal would be and has expressed a willingness to allow some aspects of Obamacare to remain. This reversal came on the heels of a meeting with President Obama. Specifically, Trump has said that he likes the provisions in Obamacare that allow for people to stay on their parent’s healthcare until they are 26 and the provision that bars insurers from discriminating against people with pre-existing conditions.¹

Republicans have by and large backed Trump’s desire to repeal Obamacare (though his remarks about keeping certain provisions have rather complicated matters). There has been a desire expressed by many Republican lawmakers to phase in the repeal over several years in order to create a softer transition. This desire for a delay in the actual repeal can most likely be attributed to the uncertainty of what should actually replace Obamacare. Some possible answers as to what Trump envisions will replace Obamacare may lay in his choice of Tim Price to act as the head of the Department of Health and Human Services. Price, like Trump, has long advocated for the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and even introduced a bill that was designed to replace Obamacare.

¹ (Everett, 2016)

There are other aspects to Trump's approach to healthcare outside of the repealing of Obamacare. Trump proposed allowing insurance companies the ability to sell across state lines which he says will open up the market allowing pricing to become more competitive. Trump has brought the issue of illegal immigration into his healthcare policies by stating that he believes that illegal immigrants [cost the healthcare system](#) around \$11 Billion a year. Some however disagree with these figures, saying that illegal immigrants often pay out of pocket for insurance or buy [private insurance](#).

Education

While Trump's stance on education did not receive the same number of headlines as his views on immigration and healthcare, during the course of his campaign he did set out what he thinks should be the education policy for American schools. Like his stance on other issues, Trump favors a lessened role for the federal government in favor of more control in the hands of states.

Donald Trump favors school choice which means that students would be able to pick what school they wanted to attend, whether it is a public school or private. Trump has accused public schools of being a failing monopoly that are too beholden to teachers unions. To combat this, he had proposed providing \$20 Billion worth of federal grants to all schools, private and public, with the expectation that states would add another \$110 Billion. This would mean that charter schools and private schools in general would become much more abundant and could receive federal grant money. Trump argues that this would allow the free market to make schooling both more competitive and of higher quality.

Betsy DeVos was recently nominated to be Secretary of Education. DeVos is a billionaire activist who was very active in the Michigan education scene where she pushed hard for school vouchers for private and charter schools. In addition, she has pushed against

the "Common Core State Standards Initiative", though its removal is not likely a part of Trump's platform. There have already been 40 states that have adopted the Common Core Initiative which makes its repeal all the less likely.

Conclusion

It remains to be seen just how Donald Trump's stated positions on Healthcare and Education will be implemented once he is sworn into office. Republicans seemingly back Trump's plan to repeal Obamacare although there are varying ideas on which provisions should be kept and the actual timeframe of the repeal. Regarding education, school choice and more grant money for private schools seem inevitable, especially considering Betsy DeVos' free-market philosophy and influence.