

The insanity of overregulation reaches into health care

by Randy Bright <http://www.tulsabeacon.com/?p=3869#more-3869>

The health care bill has been passed and signed into law, apparently without a constitutional up or down vote.

Whether it really happens or not isn't irrelevant, but the point in fact is that we have allowed the inmates to run the asylum. Had it not happened that weekend, the lunatics in Washington would continue to try to pass it again and again until somehow, some way, it becomes the law of the land.

Without real constitutional leadership from the president down to the lowest elected official, things will just get more insane.

Not that things aren't insane enough as it is, and in the world of zoning and land regulation, things don't get much nuttier than on the east coast.

For example, New Jersey has found it necessary to write a law that will protect developers from zoning officials who have been forcing them to conform to new zoning regulations after their projects have already been reviewed, approved and permitted.

According to a story by James Osborne on philly.com, "Legislation that would limit how much towns and cities can alter real estate development rules once projects are filed passed the new Jersey Assembly yesterday. The bipartisan legislation, which...awaits a decision by Gov. Christie, would keep the zoning code that was in effect at the time a developer filed a project application as the rule until completion."

Isn't that what an intelligent person would expect?

Now that might sound like progress, but notice that they are not trying to prohibit the practice, but limit it. That means that in some cases, they may still be able change the rules even while a project is under construction. Even so, environmentalists and planners oppose the bill.

According to a spokeswoman from the New Jersey Builder's Association, "a developer can spend five years and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars, and then municipalities are able to change those ordinances at a whim. It happens all the time."

New Jersey's unemployment rate is about 10 percent and they are actually trying to discourage construction?

Oh, well, that's nothing. Take Pleasanton, California. Here's a state that has done just about everything wrong, has gone broke, and is losing population and businesses. But to Pleasanton's

dismay, a judge has declared that they aren't allowed to set a limit of 29,000 housing units in their town.

Apparently California has a law on the books that requires cities to accommodate market demand by making land available for development. So to get around that law, they now are considering a moratorium on commercial construction to limit the number of available jobs. They reason that if there are no additional jobs available, the residential construction market will dry up and accomplish their goal to limit growth.

One blogger commenting on their dilemma said that the solution wasn't difficult at all. All they need to do is to pass a law like San Francisco has been using for years, the "discretionary review law." Apparently this law allows just about anyone to kill any project, just by objecting. In fact, the blogger indicated that people actually use the law to extort money from developers by threatening to object to their projects.

How about Detroit? They've hired an urban planner to bring smart growth to their city, where, according to an article in the Detroit News, the city's population has declined from 1.8 million in 1950 to its current 900,000. Detroit crumbled because businesses left for the suburbs in such large numbers that it left nearly 50 square miles of land full of vacant and abandoned properties.

How can these kinds of things happen in America? It all happened because thousands of people in power or an elected position decided to ignore our Constitution and the free market.

The insanity of overregulation will happen here, in Tulsa, and all over Oklahoma, unless we begin putting people in office who thoroughly understand the constitution, are willing to uphold it, and cherish freedom as much as we do. It is for that reason that I am going to do my part to help Randy Brogdon become Oklahoma's next governor, and John Wright to become our next lieutenant governor. More on both of them in coming issues.

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