MedicalXpress

Obama comes out fighting on health care

December 3 2013

US President Barack Obama on Tuesday tried to turn the focus away from the glitch-riven debut of his landmark health care law to its benefits, hoping to reverse a rough political run.

"If I have got to fight another three years to make sure this law works, then that is what I will do," Obama said, launching a new White House effort to rebrand the law, which has been overshadowed by a calamitous website rollout.

Obama's personal and political approval ratings have taken a beating since the website was first put up on October 1 and Republicans, who want to repeal the law, are gleefully exploiting a golden political opening.

The president said at a speech in the White House complex which seemed partly an attempt to buck up supporters that coverage of the poor start to the law had overshadowed its benefits.

He said he set off to pass health care reform in the first place because more than 41 million Americans had no health insurance and many others fell prey to restrictions on coverage and treatment imposed by the insurance industry.

"We felt we were better than that and that's why we took this on," he said.

"That's what's gotten lost a little bit over the last couple of months.

"The bottom line is, this law is working and will work into the future."

The White House said that it will stage events highlighting the benefits of the law, including the ban on insurance companies rejecting new patients with pre-existing conditions and a fall in health care costs.

But Republicans were quick to mock the president's initiative—arguing that there were fundamental problems with the health care law that cannot simply be fixed by tinkering with a website.

"Another campaign-style event won't solve the myriad problems facing consumers under Obamacare," said the top Republican in the Senate, Mitch McConnell.

"The American people have been learning about the impact Obamacare will have on individuals and families in the form of higher premiums, disrupted insurance, and lost jobs - more broken promises from the administration.

"They're becoming increasingly aware of the fact Obamacare is broken beyond repair."

Obama however hit back personally at McConnell, saying he had offered no solution to fixing what the president described as a broken health care system, before he passed the Affordable Care Act, now known as Obamacare, in 2010.

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Citation: Obama comes out fighting on health care (2013, December 3) retrieved 2 May 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-12-obama-health.html

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