

2014 - Charleston Gazette Article On Obamacare

➤ ***Charleston Gazette*, Feb. 7, 2014: “As State Senator, Jenkins Voted For ACA Provisions”**

- “As state senator, Jenkins voted for ACA provisions

“Americans for Prosperity, an organization financed by the billionaire Koch brothers, began running a new television ad this week attacking Rep. Nick J. Rahall, D-W.Va., for supporting the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

“The group, which opened its West Virginia chapter this week, is backing Sen. Evan Jenkins, R-Cabell, who is running for the seat Rahall first won back in 1976.

“Jenkins, who announced in July that he would run against Rahall, began urging the repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

“‘Evan knows that Obamacare will cost trillions, raise premiums and kill jobs,’ his campaign website states. ‘As the disastrous implementation of Obama's health law has proved, this is a classic boondoggle that will greatly damage our health care system.’”

“But as a state senator, Jenkins repeatedly voted in favor of state laws to help implement some provisions of the ACA, including the West Virginia Health Benefit Exchange to facilitate the sale of health-insurance plans to West Virginia residents. The bill also helped small businesses enroll their employees in health plans.

“Jenkins, executive director of the West Virginia State Medical Association, attended an American Medical Association meeting in Washington, D.C. in June 2009 where President Obama spoke.

“‘Jenkins said the physicians in the audience generally embraced the idea of an insurance exchange for consumers, and they were pleased when Obama assured them he had no plans to adopt a single-payer system like those in other countries,’ The State Journal reported on June 9, 2009.

“As a West Virginia legislator in 2007, Jenkins voted for a law that increased the age for children to remain eligible for health insurance under their parents' plans until they were 25 - similar to a provision in the national ACA. (The bill passed the state Senate 30-3.)

“In 2006, Jenkins voted for health care legislation, proposed by then-Gov. Joe Manchin, to expand the Children's Health Insurance Program to help more children in low-income families.

“The West Virginia State Medical Association has also supported some health-care reforms, including: expanding Medicaid, requiring insurance companies to cover

maternity health care costs and preventing insurance companies from refusing health-care coverage to people with 'pre-existing conditions.'

"In a statement provided to The Charleston Gazette, Jenkins said, 'In West Virginia, I've been proud to champion common-sense health reforms that actually work, such as medical liability reform to keep doctors in-state, a Patient's Bill of Rights to give working families greater health care freedom, and expanded access to care for those with pre-existing conditions.

"These are the kind of reforms that enjoy broad support from both parties, and that Washington should have embraced,' Jenkins said.

"Jenkins changed his party registration, from Democrat to Republican, shortly before he announced he was running against Rahall.

"On Wednesday, the West Virginia Democratic Party said Americans for Prosperity and national Republicans 'are trying yet again to mislead West Virginia voters about Nick Rahall's record.'

"Rahall was one of the first to demand accountability for the disastrous rollout of Obamacare and has vowed to fix the problems with the law so that it works for West Virginians,' according to the state party's news release.

"He has spent his entire career working to protect West Virginia coal jobs, bringing infrastructure projects to his district, and preserving Social Security and Medicare.'

"Conrad Lucas, chairman of West Virginia's Republican Party, said he 'thinks Rahall's longevity is as much a weakness as it is a strength. We want to point out all of the disservice he does to West Virginians in Washington, D.C.'

"Americans for Prosperity has also been running similar television ads attacking Sens. Kay Hagan, D-N.C.; Mary Landrieu, D-La.; and Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H."¹

Editorial, *Charleston Gazette*, Feb. 18, 2014

➤ **Editorial, *Charleston Gazette*, Feb. 18, 2014: "The New Republican's Campaign Website Says: 'Evan Knows That Obamacare Will Cost Trillions, Raise Premiums And Kill Jobs.' Yet Jenkins, Who Happens To Be Executive Director Of The West Virginia State Medical Association, Backed Most ACA Breakthroughs When He Was A Democrat."**

- "Flip-flop: Jenkins questioned

"A West Virginia labor leader raises an intriguing ethics question: Is it dishonest for a politician to win office with backing from his party's regulars -- then switch to the opposite party in mid-term?

“AFL-CIO official Tim Millne demanded that Evan Jenkins of Huntington resign from the state Senate. Jenkins was elected as a Democrat from Cabell and Wayne counties in 2010. But last July, Jenkins switched to Republican and announced he will oppose longtime Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., for Congress. He has no opponent in the May 13 primary, so he's sure to be the GOP challenger against Rahall in November.

“Since the senator's four-year term in the Legislature lasts until 2015, he gets a free ride: He can continue serving in the Senate while running for the U.S. House.

“In a letter, Millne said Jenkins should stop this double role as senator and candidate, and quit the Legislature. The labor leader complained that ‘you changed your party affiliation before the end of your term. This is not fair to the good Democrats of Cabell and Wayne counties.... It is ethically wrong to sit in a seat where Democratic voters elected you to represent their values.’

“Will Jenkins resign? Will he apologize to the Cabell-Wayne Democrats who elected him? Or will nothing happen, and West Virginia politics-as-usual follow its typical sordid course?

“A right-wing front group for the billionaire Koch brothers is running smear ads against Rahall. As the Gazette's Paul Nyden revealed, Jenkins now denounces President Obama's Affordable Care Act -- even though he previously supported most of its provisions while a Democratic state legislator.

“The new Republican's campaign website says: ‘Evan knows that Obamacare will cost trillions, raise premiums and kill jobs.’ Yet Jenkins, who happens to be executive director of the West Virginia State Medical Association, backed most ACA breakthroughs when he was a Democrat.

“Universal health care should be a human right for everyone. Did Jenkins support that principle as a Democrat, and oppose it now that he's a Republican?

“Labor leader Millne is correct: The 2014 campaign raises some troubling ethics questions.”²

➤ **Jenkins Voted For “Legislation To Let The State Run Its Own Health Insurance Exchange Starting In 2014. The Bill (SB408) Passed The House And Senate Along Party Lines, On 63-34 And 27-6 Votes.”**

Bill Number	Date Of Senate Vote	Question	Jenkins Voted	Vote Count	Language From Legislative Wrap-Up	NOTES
SB408	March 12, 2011	On motion of Senator Unger, the Senate concurred in the House of Delegates amendments to the bill. Engrossed Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 408, as amended by the House of Delegates, was then put upon its passage. On the passage of the bill	Y	27-6	“Senate Bill 408 (WV Health Benefit Exchange Act) establishes a West Virginia Health Benefit Exchange to facilitate the purchase and sale of qualified health plans in the individual market. It will also establish a Small Business Health Options Program within the exchange, to assist qualified small employers in facilitating the enrollment of their employees in qualified health plans.” (Source: “Wrap-Up: The Official Newsletter of the West Virginia Legislature,” April 27, 2011)	Chapter 100, Acts, Regular Session, 2011