

Sex Change We Can Believe In?

Taxpayer-funded sex changes: They aren't just for traitors and illegal immigrants anymore! While the rest of the media was racing from story to story over the weekend, HHS quietly tried to disguise the reversal of a 33-year-old coverage ban on gender reassignment surgery.

In a 48-hour span that saw the resignation of the VA chief and the potentially illegal release of five top Taliban terrorists, taxpayer-sponsored genital reconstruction almost seems tame by comparison. Every week, the competition for most scandalous decision gets stiffer, as evidenced by this story—which, under any other circumstances, would be front-page news. Instead, it's just another sign of an administration wildly out of control—and out of excuses—for its taxpayer-funded extremism.

After Friday, HHS has ruled that it's "no longer reasonable" to expect older Americans to pay for their own sexual reassignments. Instead, it now recognizes the surgery as a "medically necessary" and "effective" treatment for people who can't come to grips with their own biological gender. Like Denée Mallon. The 74-year-old Army veteran was the driving force behind the change, even going so far as to sue HHS for the benefit—which, according to some estimates, could run as much as \$50,000 a procedure. (And we wonder why America is more than \$17 trillion in debt?)

The policy, which private insurers are certain to imitate, gives patients the right to petition Medicare to cover their operations. Despite the sky-high costs and an even higher controversy quotient, the Obama administration believes it's the taxpayers' responsibility to cover an elective body enhancement that may only elevate the mental and physical risks for people suffering from gender confusion. If the government will pay for this, why not plastic surgery for

people who don't feel as old as their age? As if people couldn't be more disgusted, the double standard remains.

While President Obama is busy financing senior sex changes, wounded veterans are dying for lack of medical care. If you want a snapshot of this administration's priorities, that's it. Making matters worse, the move only paves the way for gender reassignment surgeries to be a routinely covered benefit—like abortion. This is exactly what Family Research Council warned about when Obamacare was passed.

In the 2,000-plus pages of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, there are literally 4,156 issues left to the administration's discretion. (Or indiscretion, as this case would imply.) People everywhere are realizing—too late—that those issues include outrages like contraception mandates and politically correct surgeries that no Congress would have approved.

That's why the health care law is so dangerous. It empowers the government to practice politics—instead of empowering others to practice medicine. Americans are free to disfigure their bodies—but they shouldn't be free to ask taxpayers to foot the bill.

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