

H A R L A N   R I C H A R D S

Long Live the Affordable Care Act

December 13, 2013

I think I was as shocked and surprised and President Obama claimed to be when the website for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) did not function. Anyone who has ever written computer code or set up a website knows that software has to be tested and usually revised numerous times to make it functional. I find it hard to believe that the people in charge of building the website didn't know it wasn't going to work.

Republican ideologues have been trying to derail the ACA since it was enacted. It is too convenient and too coincidental that the only thing which could undermine the ACA occurred and it was a complete surprise to everyone. Somebody had to have known it was going to fail and kept his or her mouth shut for the express purpose of having the ACA publicly fail. Was it based on ideology? Did an anti-ACA operative underbid the contract to build the website so he or she could sabotage it from within? Or perhaps blackmail was used? Or bribery? I have to admit this is all speculation on my part. I have no proof nor any way to even look for evidence. But if you ask any software engineer about the procedure which was followed, you will be told that websites are never launched without extensive testing beforehand to make sure they work.

I think we should take some of those National Security Agency contractors who are busily intercepting all our communications (and those of our allies), and put them to work finding out who knew what (and when) and why they didn't tell anyone.