

## Biden vs. Politifacto

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By James Freeman

(Wall Street Journal) --

Americans wondering what a Biden administration would do to their health care cannot be reassured by the former vice president's comments on the subject at Thursday night's presidential debate in Nashville. Joe Biden resurrected a claim about the last great government intervention into medical markets that has gone down as one of the most consequential falsehoods by a government official in years.

In response to President Donald Trump's argument that Mr. Biden's creation of a new government health plan would destroy private insurance plans, Mr. Biden said:

*Not one single person with private insurance would lose their insurance under my plan, nor did they under Obamacare. They did not lose their insurance unless they chose they wanted to go to something else.*

It is nothing short of stunning that Mr. Biden is still trying to get away with this claim about the so-called Affordable Care Act, which he championed alongside then-President Barack Obama. Among the millions who saw their policies cancelled was Edie Littlefield Sundby, who wrote in the Journal in November of 2013:

*Everyone now is clamoring about Affordable Care Act winners and losers. I am one of the losers.*

*My grievance is not political; all my energies are directed to enjoying life and staying alive, and I have no time for politics. For almost seven years I have fought and survived stage-4 gallbladder cancer, with a five-year survival rate of less than 2% after diagnosis. I am a determined fighter and extremely lucky. But this luck may have just run out: My affordable, lifesaving medical insurance policy has been canceled effective Dec. 31.*

Thank goodness that Ms. Sundby found a way to survive and this year was still able to continue her walks along the California coast. But the chaos caused by the law was widespread. Back in 2013, four days after Ms. Sundby's op-ed appeared in the Journal, Chuck Todd of NBC News reported:

*President Obama said Thursday that he is "sorry" that some Americans are losing their current health insurance plans as a result of the Affordable Care Act, despite his promise that no one would have to give up a health plan they liked.*

*"I am sorry that they are finding themselves in this situation based on assurances they got from me," he told NBC News in an exclusive interview at the White House...*

*Obama's comments come 10 days after NBC News' Lisa Myers reported that the administration has known since the summer of 2010 that millions of Americans could lose their insurance under the law.*

Is there even a remote possibility that Mr. Biden never heard about this issue around the office? If he somehow missed the years of Mr. Obama offering his signature promise and then acknowledging that it was false, the vice president had still another opportunity to notice the problem.

A little more than a month after President Obama's interview with NBC, Politifact announced its "Lie of the Year." Wrote the organization's Angie Drobnic Holan:

*It was a catchy political pitch... "If you like your health care plan, you can keep it," President Barack Obama said – many times – of his landmark new law.*

*But the promise was impossible to keep.*

*So this fall, as cancellation letters were going out to approximately 4 million Americans, the public realized Obama's breezy assurances were wrong.*

Seven years after his former boss apologized for one of the most famous broken promises in presidential history, Mr. Biden is still making this pitch.

The former vice president is also offering a similar pitch about his own signature health proposal. Mr. Biden says that his new "public option" government insurer would not mean the end of private health plans. Can American consumers trust him again?