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POLITICS

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A group of Democratic senators is urging the Obama administration to delay a key portion of Obamacare because the results could be "harmful and disruptive."

In a letter exclusively obtained by The Daily Caller, Senate Democrats pleaded with Health and Human Services secretary Sylvia Matthews Burwell to delay an Obamacare rule change that puts companies with 51 to 100 employees in the costlier "small group" market instead of the "large group" market.

The letter was signed by Democratic Sens. Claire McCaskill, Heidi Heitkamp, Chris Coons, Joe Manchin, Joe Donnelly and Jon Tester and independent Sen. Angus King, who caucuses with the Democrats.

"We are writing to share our concerns regarding scheduled changes to the definition of the small group market under the Affordable Care Act (ACA)," the senators wrote in the letter, dated March 12.

"Under the law, employers with 51 to 100 employees will be included in the ACA's definition of small group market starting in 2016. Instead of providing stability, we believe expanding the definition will force those historically defined 'large group plans' into the 'small group market,' where they could experience higher premiums, less flexibility, and new barriers to coverage.

"We appreciate the Administration's efforts to ensure the law is implemented in the least disruptive, most beneficial manner. For example, the Administration has delayed implementation of the employer shared responsibility requirements. At the same time, the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) has experienced delays in implementation.

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