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## Who needs taxes? Health pays for itself

*President Barack Obama's first full fiscal year budget, which covers Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, 2010, will bring with it a round of new and increased taxes. And if you ask some economists, they'll tell you to prepare for one of the worst misuses of tax money in history — Obama's health care plan.*

Health care already takes nearly 20 to 25 percent of the total U.S. budget every year. But in 2010, Obama plans to dredge up an extra \$634 billion for a reserve fund to pay for government health care options over 10 years.

That's a lot of cash. So why does the government need more?

"It doesn't," said Dr. William Winkenwerder, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs under former President George W. Bush. "We already spend 50 percent more money per person for health care than any other country," he said. "There is enough money already in the system to fund excellent health care for all Americans, if it is properly spent."

**Sury Anand, CEO of New York-based Atlantis Health Plan** said the market simply needs more competition among insurance providers.

"As is planned now, it is unaffordable and unnecessary," Anand said. "The emphasis should be refocused on ... affordability. Government generally tends to be less creative and less flexible than private industry."

### THE MATH

Robert Levine, a doctor and author of "Shock Therapy for the American Health Care System," breaks down how Obama's health plan can be paid for without new taxes.

- 30 percent of health care costs go to unnecessary care: **\$800 billion**
- Administrative costs make up 20 percent of health care costs: **\$500 billion**
- Cut unnecessary care by two-thirds: save **\$600 billion**
- Cut administrative costs in half: save **\$250 billion**
- Total savings: **\$850 billion**; Obama wants **\$634 billion**.