When Obamacare was signed into law in March, the President assured Americans that it does not, in any way, shape, or form, fund elective abortions. He even signed an executive order to this effect. The only problem with Obama’s claims, which are being repeated by politicians like Harry Reid and partisan groups like Democrats for Life of America, is that they are not true.

The only real abortion restriction in Obamacare was in fact removed before the President signed the bill into law. This was the so-called “Stupak-Pitts Amendment”, named after Democrat Bart Stupak and Republican Joe Pitts, that was inserted into the House version of the bill. This amendment applied the Hyde Amendment abortion restrictions, which forbids certain Health and Human Services (HHS) funds from being used to pay for abortions, to Obamacare.

The Stupak-Pitts Amendment was necessary because the original bill did not include any blanket restriction on using taxpayer funds for abortion. Neither did the original Hyde Amendment suffice (despite what Harry Reid has claimed), since Obamacare creates lots of new pathways for sending money directly to various health care projects, bypassing HHS and the Hyde Amendment restrictions altogether. (We will talk about these in a minute.)

The problem was that the Senate version of the bill contained no abortion restrictions. But instead of putting pressure on the Senate Democrats to add the Stupak-Pitts Amendment to their version of the bill, the Obama administration chose instead to place enormous pressure on the House to take this language out of their bill. In the end, nearly all the House Democrats, including the small “pro-life” contingent, did as they were told. As a result, there are no restrictions against abortion in the bill itself.

In exchange, the President with great fanfare signed an executive order that supposedly amends the health care legislation to preclude abortion funding. The problem is that it does
no such thing, because it can’t: An executive order is not law and cannot amend legislation. The courts will throw out the President’s piece of paper as soon as it is challenged. There is no way that Obama, who is a Harvard-trained lawyer, doesn’t know this. His political allies certainly do. The head of Planned Parenthood, an organization that stands to make a lot of money off Obamacare, dismissed the executive order as nothing more than a “symbolic gesture.”

So what is all this presidential posturing really about? Was it merely an effort to provide some political cover for “pro-life” Democrats who voted for Obamacare despite its abortion funding? If so, it hasn’t worked, to judge from the polls, which currently show most of them going down to defeat by large margins on November 2nd.

Most voters understand that, since there is no blanket restriction on abortion funding in the health care legislation, they will wind up paying for abortions, at least in some circumstances. Let me give you three of the Obamacare provisions that will, in my opinion, inevitably lead to abortion funding:

- Money for so-called “Community Health Centers”: Many of these Community Health Centers will be run by Planned Parenthood and other groups that see abortion as an essential service and, without abortion-restricting language in the bill, money that goes to these centers will be used to pay for abortions.

- Money for federal insurance plans: Obamacare will provide two or more state-sponsored insurance plans. According to the bill, only one of these plans actually needs to have restrictions on abortion—meaning that federal dollars will almost definitely be paying for abortions in the other state plan. And even this restriction is limited, and will have to be renewed every year.

- Money for “temporary high-risk pools”: Obamacare provides 5 billion dollars for “temporary high-risk pools” that will cover people with pre-existing conditions until the actual health care exchanges kick in 2014. This money goes straight to the states and is administered by them. Without abortion restrictions, the states are free to use this money to fund abortions if they feel like it. And in fact, some of them tried to do just that … until complaints by National Right to Life forced HHS to promise it would actually enforce Obama’s executive order. This will last only as long as it takes to file a court challenge, however.

Vice President Biden has been going around the country saying that Obamacare is
wonderful, but that it is simply “too complicated” to explain to the rubes out in the hustings. We disagree on many grounds, but most of all because it will force us—and all Americans—to pay for the execution of our unborn brothers and sisters.