

Written by

Thursday, 16 June 2011 16:26 - Last Updated Saturday, 21 April 2012 17:07

By JOSEPH G. LARIOS

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CHICAGO (*JGLi*) – President Barack Obama has shown that ordinary letters sent to him by ordinary people are also getting his personal attention.

Former Milan, Michigan Mayor J. Owen R. Diaz told this reporter in an e-mail that he received June 15 an ordinary, first-class mail letter with 44-cent stamp from President Obama with an embossed logo of the White House, saying, “Dear Owen, Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas. I appreciate hearing from you.

“Our Nation faces serious challenges, and we will only overcome them by involving all Americans in shaping the policies that affect their own lives.

President Obama Gets Healthcare Proposal of Former Fil-Am Mayor - MabuhayRadio

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“My Administration is continuously working to engage individuals in innovative ways. I encourage you to explore www.WhiteHouse.gov, which is regularly updated and more interactive than ever before.

“Thank you again for contacting me and providing your thoughtful suggestions.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Barack Obama.”

“I can’t believe it,” Mr. Diaz said, “President Obama just wrote me a letter of appreciation with original signature and addressing me as ‘Owen’, a pleased San Carlos City, Pangasinan, Philip pines , native broke the news to this reporter. “Of course on an official White House stationery with an embossed White House seal. The U.S. Congress is still studying my proposal as of my last inquiry.”

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Mr. Diaz wrote a letter to President Obama last January, proposing to save more than \$30-billion over the next five years in his healthcare program.

Perhaps, thinking that his letter might have been buried from among a pile of hundreds of letters that Mr. Obama receives, Mr. Diaz still held out hope that he gets notice.

\$6,740 SAVING FROM EACH FBR

An inventor and Certified Financial Planner by profession, Mr. Diaz, whose wife is a medical doctor, based his estimate on the “net average Medicare savings to the United States government and the American taxpayers if (his) proposal were implemented (at) \$6,740 per individual Foreign Born Retiree (FBR) in 2011 among Mexicans, Chinese, Filipinos, Indians, El Salvadorans, Vietnamese, and Koreans.”

The 64-year-old Diaz, who helped “address a budget deficit and implemented reduction in the property tax” when he was mayor of Milan for four years (2004-2008), said, “More savings from this proposal can be realized by private insurers and other private funds that provide secondary medical insurances and Medigaps.”

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He said, "If only an estimated 10-15% of the 65 – and-over FBRs take advantage of this opportunity, the estimated total Medicare savings from this proposal, according to the statistical inference for the said seven referenced countries in the year 2011 alone, is between \$2,787,414,620 and \$4,181,118,560. Over five years, this savings increases to between 22-billion and 30-billion dollars."

ATTENDING PICC CONVENTION

He said he might share his Medicare proposal in Manila during a convention at the Philippine International Convention Center to be held on Sept. 27, 28, and 29th this year when he takes a family vacation until the middle of October.

Mr. Diaz was informed about the event by his fellow Michigan resident, Ed Navarra, national chair of National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA). He wrote Mr. Edwin Pajares, Senior Immigrant Service Officer of the Commission on Filipino Overseas, which is co-hosting the event with the US Pinoys for Good Governance (USP4GG) and NaFFAA, if he can make a "10-15 minute" presentation and share his summary handouts of his proposal.

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Eric Lachica, a proponent of a 'US Medicare Portability Proposal,' said he is considering his group hooking up with Mr. Diaz' health care proposal.

Mr. Diaz, who is administrator for an Urgent Care Clinic and presently managing a Mental Health Clinic, said, "The estimated overall savings can be much more, if we use the figures applying the relative medical procedure costs and further considering the enormous "end-of-life" health care cost, the estimated overall savings could be even significantly greater if the proposal were to be extended to non-FBRs who elected to live abroad in the cited countries or in other countries that may qualify to have Medicare attachés in the future."

Citing the Congressional Budget Office, Mr. Diaz said, in June 2010, the federal budget deficit is "going to get much worse and become unsustainable because of cost increases in Medicare and Medicaid. This proposal can bring about net savings of an estimated 50% per FBR beneficiary, as compared with the Medicare costs for beneficiaries living in the United States

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Most medical procedures in the United States, he said, can be performed in other countries, such as the Philippines, at less than half the cost. This coverage proposal calls for, in certain limited circumstances, the allowance of Medicare payments to medical providers outside of the United States, of up to 50% of the customary reimbursement fees afforded to medical providers within the United States

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The proposed adjustment in benefit coverage takes into consideration the logistical and administrative costs of providing coverage to FBRs, while providing significant savings to the United States government.

The bottom line is that with the passing of the healthcare reform legislation, which seeks to increase access to medical care by more covered people, this proposal will serve to “relieve pressure on our limited health care providers in the United States, restrain costs and, most importantly, provide relief to the tax-payers of the United States.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2011, there will be 4,135,626 FBRs 65 and over, from Mexico (2,636,044), China (259,861), Philippines (327,556), India (290,121), El Salvador (212,131), Vietnam (211,507), and Korea (198,405) for a total of 4,135,626.

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If 10% of these FBRs will return to their country of origin, the U.S. Medicare savings will be \$2.9-billion and if 15%, savings will be \$4.1-billion. # # #

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