

[Concerns Growing Over Additional Health Care Mandates](#)

Posted on March 30, 2011 by [John LeBlanc](#)

The [California Legislature](#) is looking to impose additional health coverage mandates on Californians, forcing insurers to cover such things as acupuncture and tobacco cessation drugs. Insurers are concerned over the costs of these mandates, especially in light of federal reforms.

A recent article, [Health insurers to fight Calif. coverage mandates](#), by [Victoria Colliver, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer](#), discusses why these new mandates might do more harm than good:

The state Legislature is considering a bumper crop of 15 bills that would increase what health insurers have to cover - everything from acupuncture to maternity care to autism treatments.

California has a long history of mandating or trying to impose coverage requirements on health insurers. But what's different this year is that insurers are gearing up for a fight based on the year-old federal health care law, which will establish a minimum level of benefits that insurers would have to provide for their products to be sold in the new marketplace.

If California forces its health insurers to cover more than the federal government requires, the state will be on the hook for the extra costs in subsidized policies. And with a budget deficit of \$26 billion, that's probably not something the state can afford.

Barger & Wolen will continue to track these bills as they move their way through the legislature. For a list of health care bills introduced in California, please see the [California Association of Health Plan's Legislative Update](#).