

# ON MONDAY THOUSANDS LOSE THEIR HEALTHCARE

McClatchy has an important story reminding that the COBRA subsidy expires on Monday. (h/t Atrios)

Hall, 56, is among an estimated 7 million unemployed Americans who get a federal subsidy to help them buy health insurance under legislation known as the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act.

For workers who are laid off or downsized between Sept. 1, 2008, and Dec. 31, 2009, the COBRA subsidy pays 65 percent of their job-based health insurance premiums for nine months.

That subsidy, however, expires Monday for Hall and untold thousands of others who began receiving it in March, when it first became available as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

And while people who have been receiving this subsidy won't lose their healthcare per se, at a cost of around \$700/month for a family, they will no longer be able to afford health care and therefore will choose to go without. And that, I fear, is going to make the large scale long term joblessness in the Midwest a much more painful, because just as more people will be attempting to make do, cities and states are having to cut back on services to balance budgets.

I remember talking to people about this looming date several months ago—it was a moment they were anticipating when their otherwise functional ability to deal with long term unemployment was going to get really bad.