

## **Budget deficit seen as major concern in health overhaul plans.**

The [Economist](#) (7/23) reported that recently, "three committees in the House of Representatives had presented a plan to provide health coverage for the uninsured with the help of hefty tax increases on the rich." However, "on July 16th, Douglas Elmendorf, Congress's chief budget scorekeeper, stunned Washington when he said the bill would not only fail to tame healthcare costs, but would permanently shift them higher. It would add \$239 billion to the deficit in the next decade, and far more thereafter." As a result, the following day, "conservative Democrats joined Republicans on two committees in voting against the bill, though it still passed." According to the Economist, the fact that "Mr. Elmendorf's comments made such an impact signifies the growing political potency of the deficit." Indeed, a new poll shows that, "by a big margin, Americans think Mr. Obama is paying too little attention to it."