**Resolved: The United States ought to guarantee universal healthcare for its citizens.**

**Value: Morality**

**Value Criterion: Preserving Individual Autonomy**

1. "Morality is thus the relation of actions to the autonomy of the will, that is, to a possible giving of universal law through its maxims. An action that can coexist with the autonomy of the will is permitted; one that does not accord with it is forbidden. A will whose maxims necessarily harmonize with the laws of autonomy is a holy, absolutely good will. The dependence upon the principle of autonomy of a will that is not absolutely good (moral necessitation) is obligation. This, accordingly, cannot be attributed to a holy being. The objective of an action from obligation is called duty."

-Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

2. "Individuals have rights and there are things no person or group may do to them (without violating their rights). So strong and far-reaching are these rights that they raise the question of what, if anything, the state and its officials may do. How much room do individual rights leave for the state? Our main conclusions about the state are that a minimal state, limited, to the narrow functions of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contracts, and so on, is justified, but any more extensive state will violate persons' rights not to be forced to do certain things, and is unjustified; and that the minimal state is inspiring as well as right."

-Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

Nozick argues that preserving individual rights and autonomy is far more important than obligations of the state.

3. Morality is the factor that determines whether a certain action is right or wrong. Without individual autonomy, human society would never have been able to develop moral norms, and it would never have been able to excercise them. Furthermore, if one is unable to choose one's own actions, they are effectively in a state of slavery. If one lacks individual autonomy, would life even be worth living?

4. "Side constraints express the inviolability of other persons. But why may not one violate persons for the greater social good? Individually, we each sometimes choose to undergo some pain or sacrifice for a greater benefit or to avoid a greater harm.  In each case, some cost is borne for the sake of the greater overall good. Why not, similarly, hold that some persons have to bear some costs that benefit other persons more., for the sake of the overall social good? But **there is no social entity with a good that undergoes some sacrifice for its own good. There are only individual people, different individual people, with their own individual lives. Using one of these people for the benefit of others, uses him and benefits the others. Nothing more. What happens is that something is done to him for the sake of others. Talk of an overall social good covers this up. To use a person in this way does not sufficiently respect and take account of the fact that he is a separate person, that his is the only life he has. He does not get some overbalancing good from his sacrifice, and no one is entitled to force this upon him--least of all a state or government that claims his allegiance (as other individuals do not) and that therefore scrupulously must be neutral between its citizens.**"

-Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

**Thus preserving individual autonomy upholds the value of morality.**

**Universal Health Care undermines the autonomy of the U.S. populace.**

**Contention 1: Universal Health Care forces involuntary loss of property**

"Desirable though it may be for the affluent to support the less fortunate – by subsidizing their health care or housing or education – such help should be left up to the individual to undertake, not mandated by the government...redistributive taxes are a form of coercion, even theft. The state has no more right to force affluent taxpayers to support social programs for the poor than a benevolent thief has the right to steal money from a rich persona and give it to the homeless."

-Michael Sandel [Prof. of Government, Harvard University], Justice: What's The Right Thing To Do?, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, p. 60-61

Coercing individuals in this manner does not respect their autonomy. This arbitrates individuals to the point of dehumanization.

**Contention 2: UHC Limits an Individual's Ability to use their own assets to receive better care**

**Subpoint A:**

"[Universal] Health care will be rationed by means other than price. This will have inevitable adverse effects, including long waits and reduced quality. In Britain, over 800,000 patients are waiting for hospital care. In Canada, the average wait between a general practitioner referral and a specialty consultation has been over 17 weeks. Beyond queuing for care or services, single-payer systems are often characterized by strict drug formularies, limited treatment options, and discrimination by age in the provision of care. Price controls, a routine feature of such systems, also result in reduced drug, technology, and medical device research. Because individuals remain insulated from the direct costs of health care, as in many third-party payment systems, health care appears to be “free.” As a result, demand expands while government officials devise ways to control costs. The shortest route is by providing fewer products and services through explicit and implicit rationing."

-Kevin C. Fleming, "High-Priced Pain: What to Expect from a Single-Payer Health Care System."

Providing universal healthcare subjects the entire society to great deal of pain. However, it would also prevent one from using one's own monetary assets to receive better care and pay more or to find a cheaper alternative. Thereby, it violates individual autonomy when choosing health goods and services by severely limiting choice. Furthermore, it could set a precedent that would lead to governments obviating individual autonomy entirely.

**Subpoint B: Unduly increases tax burden on those who would have chosen not to have healthcare**

Many people in the U.S. have chosen not to purchase healthcare, and they cannot be forced to pay for it in the form of taxes. This completely violates the autonomy of the people in forcing them to pay for something they could have done without.