By Carl Golden | Posted: Friday, July 20, 2012 1:00 am

For Mitt Romney, the Supreme Court decision affirming the constitutionality of the national health care law presents both a test and an opportunity: A test to determine if he’ll resist the temptation to build the remainder of his campaign around the repeal of the law, and an opportunity to seize firmer control of the national debate by exploiting President Barack Obama’s greatest vulnerability — a dismal economy.

In the immediate post-decision flush, Romney returned to his “repeal and replace” mantra, promising that his first act in office would be rolling back Obamacare and implementing, well, something not yet fully defined nor adequately explained.

While the country was divided on the overall health care program, key provisions of it enjoyed broad popular support — coverage for pre-existing conditions, eliminating the cap on total insurance payouts, and allowing children to remain on parents’ plans until age 26.

The Obama campaign will surely highlight these provisions in an effort to force Romney into expressing support or opposition to them and place him in an awkward position of calling for the repeal of only a part of the law, while cherry-picking those sections that appeal to a broader segment of voters. Endeavoring to draw easily understood distinctions between the supportable and the distasteful will only muddy the message.

Romney’s already been tied up in rhetorical knots over his tortured attempts to explain the differences between the health care program he instituted as governor of Massachusetts and Obamacare, mostly because they’re not that many nor that substantial.

Concentrating on the court ruling and continuing to attack it runs the risk of crowding out the far more potent