

County Exec. Abele: Reaffirms commitment to Affordable Care Act, Women's healthcare protections

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MILWAUKEE – A landmark achievement of President Barack Obama and a bipartisan coalition of Congressional leaders, the Affordable Care Act is still empowering healthier lives in Milwaukee County and around the country, despite repeated attempts in Congress to repeal the Act and its critical health protections. Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele today reaffirmed his support for the Affordable Care Act, and especially for the critical women's health protections the ACA guaranteed five years ago today.

Milwaukee County has experienced a 58 percent reduction in the County's uninsured rate since the law took effect. In 2015 alone, 38,242 people in Milwaukee County — many who had never been covered before — enrolled into the Marketplace during President Obama's Healthy Communities Challenge, making Milwaukee County the winner of the national Challenge and, more importantly, ensuring all our residents have access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare, including women's reproductive healthcare.

Five years ago today, on August 1, 2012, the Affordable Care Act expanded preventive healthcare coverage for women's health and well-being, requiring all

health insurance plans to cover: well-woman visits; counseling and screening for sexually transmitted infections; screening for gestational diabetes; comprehensive breastfeeding support and counseling; contraceptives and family planning services; and screening for domestic violence.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has projected that anywhere from 17 million to 24 million people would stand to lose their healthcare under recent proposals to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Recent federal healthcare plans have also proposed the elimination of funding for Planned Parenthood, which is the largest community-based reproductive healthcare provider in Wisconsin.

In March of 2017, County Executive Chris Abele introduced a resolution opposing the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and the elimination of funding for Planned Parenthood. And in December of 2016, County Executive Abele introduced a resolution recognizing Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin as a vital asset to the health, safety, and well-being of Milwaukee County women, men, and families. *(Note: Neither of these items have ever been brought forward by the County Board for a public discussion or vote.)*

“I believe that access to affordable healthcare, to include comprehensive reproductive healthcare, is a fundamental human right,” County Executive Chris Abele said. “The Affordable Care Act has helped tens of thousands of women, men, and families in Milwaukee County get the coverage they need to live stronger, fuller, healthier lives. We’ve seen example after example of its success in Milwaukee County, from moms using our Mamava lactation suites in the Zoo, Courthouse, and airport, to patients getting connected to coverage that treats mental illness or substance abuse out at the Behavioral Health Division. I remain a proud supporter of the Affordable Care Act.”