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Democratic Party of Wisconsin: Statement on CBO score of Speaker Ryan's Health Care Bill

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Contact:
Brandon Weathersby
brandonw@wisdems.org

MADISON – After Speaker Paul Ryan's haphazard rollout of the Republican Health Care Bill last week, which featured no estimates on the cost of their ideas or any details of how many Americans would be covered under the plan, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is shedding light on the real impacts of the Republican plan.

Today, the CBO announced that 14 million Americans will lose health insurance next year with the number of uninsured only growing over time. "In 2026, an estimated 52 million people would be uninsured, compared with 28 million who would lack insurance that year under current law," the report states.

The CBO's projections are widely viewed as unbiased and the most accurate amongst federal analysts. In fact, its projections for the Affordable Care act were more accurate than other prominent analyses from 2010. Even the Speaker has agreed with this view in the past, referring to the CBO as "nonpartisan" and using figures released from the office. [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6]

The following is the statement of Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Martha Laning in response to the recent data:

"Every American should have access to quality, affordable health care. Today's CBO report shows that Congressional Republicans, led by Speaker Paul Ryan, along with

President Trump don't share that basic value.

"President Trump has said that all Americans will have coverage under the Republican plan and Tom Price, Secretary of Health and Human Services, recently said that no one will be worse off financially under the bill. Today's news paints a much different picture.

"Speaker Ryan's bill will make everyday Americans pay more money for fewer benefits, and leave many of his fellow Wisconsinites without any health care at all. I find it appalling that Republicans would want to take us backward to a day when Americans crumble under crushing medical debt, and even worse, die needlessly because they can't afford care.

"After seven years of Republican attacks on President Obama's bill that currently insures over 20 million individuals, it is clear that Republican lawmakers have no real ideas to provide affordable health care the people of this country."

BACKGROUND

[1] Independent Analysis Of The C.B.O.'s Forecasting Concluded It Was Not Biased And Was The Most Accurate Of Federal Analysts. "In the C.B.O.'s assessment of its own accuracy, the agency says it has overestimated revenue by an average of 1.1 percent for two-year projections and by 5.3 percent for six-year projections since 1982. Similarly, the C.B.O. concluded that its economic forecasts of the past four decades 'have been comparable in quality to those of the administration and the Blue Chip consensus,' which aggregates analyses from the private sector. Independent analysis of the C.B.O.'s forecasting tends to be even more generous, concluding it is not biased (though perhaps optimistic) and citing the agency as the most accurate of federal analysts." [New York Times, 3/9/17]

[2]"The CBO's Analysis Is Generally Accepted As Sound. Its Own Assessment Of Its Record At Forecasting Economic Trends Found That Its Estimates Have Generally Been In Line With Administration Estimates And The Estimates Of An Average Of 50 Private-Sector Groups." "That particular subject aside, the CBO's analysis is generally accepted as sound. Its own assessment of its record at forecasting economic trends found that its estimates have generally been in line with administration estimates and the estimates of an average of 50 private-sector groups. The CBO's analysis is considered sound enough that both Spicer and Trump have, in the past, cited its projections for

political points." [Washington Post, 3/10/17]

[3] "The C.B.O.'s Projections For The Affordable Care Act Were More In Line With What Actually Happened Than Four Other Prominent Analyses From 2010." "C.B.O.'s predictions were off, but less so than others' The agency, created in 1974, released its analysis of the completed version of the health care law in March 2010. It estimated 21 million people would be enrolled in public marketplaces by 2016. The year ended with 11.5 million enrollees. But according to a 2015 report from the Commonwealth Fund, a health care research group, the C.B.O.'s projections for the Affordable Care Act were more in line with what actually happened than four other prominent analyses from 2010. 'Nobody always gets this stuff right,' said Sherry Glied, a health policy expert and the primary author of the report. 'But if you believe it's possible to make an assessment, they're the best at that.'" [New York Times, 3/9/17]

[4] Paul Ryan's Congressional Office Referred To The CBO As "Nonpartisan." "The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) today released its latest deficit projections, which show the budget deficit falling from $248 billion in Fiscal Year 2006 to $172 billion in Fiscal Year 2007 (FY07), primarily due to robust federal tax revenues. CBO even forecasts a deficit decline, though by a smaller amount, when additional appropriations for Iraq are enacted – estimating that the deficit would be 'in the vicinity of $200 billion' in FY07." [Press Release, Rep. Paul Ryan, 1/24/07]

[5] Ryan's "A Better Way" Health Care Plan Repeatedly Cited Figures From The "Nonpartisan" Congressional Budget Office. "The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has said that premiums in the individual market 'are projected to grow somewhat more quickly over the next few years because of factors related to the ACA.' … According to CBO, 11 million new individuals enrolled in Medicaid in 2015, and by 2025 there will be 14.5 million new people in the program. 34 Newly eligible beneficiaries will add pressure to already-strained state budgets beginning in 2016, when the federal funds to support the expansion begin to decrease and the health care law forces states to bear a greater share of the costs… The non-partisan CBO projects this job-based subsidy will lower federal revenues by $266 billion in fiscal year 2016 alone and $3.6 trillion over the next decade. 37 …This study should also review state anti-trust regulation regarding health insurance since such regulation is not preempted by McCarran-Ferguson. Past CBO analyses and third party actuarial estimates should also be consulted when studying this idea." [Health Care, "A Better Way," 6/22/16]

[6] Paul Ryan's Office Noted They Had Requested Estimates From The "Nonpartisan" Congressional Budget Office In Their Fact Sheet On Ryan's Healthcare Proposal. "15. You seem to make a lot of promises about universal health care, as well as investments in prevention and health IT. How much will your plan cost the American taxpayer? A. The Patient's Choice Act is budget neutral. A. We anticipate a cost estimate will demonstrate revenue-neutrality as well, meaning net taxes will decline, or remain at their current level, costing the American taxpayers no additional money. The legislation will redirect tax dollars, leveling the playing field so every American has access to affordable health insurance. Official cost estimates have been requested from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation." [Patients Choice Act Q&A, Rep. Paul Ryan, accessed 3/10/17]