

Sen. Erpenbach: Letter on Governor Walker's BadgerCare Reform waiver request

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 20, 2017

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Letter from Sen. Erpenbach:

"I write to you today to provide public comment on your short-sighted BadgerCare Reform Demonstration Waiver. Your policy proposal continues to leave Wisconsin behind thirty-one other states that have wisely made the fiscally responsible choice to expand Medicaid to 138% of the federal poverty level.

This bad decision has cost Wisconsin taxpayers over \$1 billion, 10,000 health care jobs, and left 79,000 low-income Wisconsin residents who need health insurance out in the cold. This waiver is the Walker Administration's chance to do the right thing. I hope you will recognize that this has been a failed experiment in partisan ideology and take this opportunity to change course.

In order to qualify for BadgerCare Plus, a single adult cannot make more than \$12,060 per year. Extending coverage to more people at less cost to taxpayers should be simple. This waiver should include an eligibility expansion that allows Wisconsin to recoup the enhanced federal matching funds, but once again political ambition, partisan talking points, and conservative ideology win the day instead of Wisconsin's well-being.

With this waiver you could help prevent financial hardship for low-income families, create new health care jobs, prevent a massive cost-shift onto the private insurance market, reduce the hidden health care tax on Wisconsin's hospitals, and save the

state \$190 million per year. Instead, you fail to see the wisdom of other Republican Administrations around the nation and put Wisconsin at a significant disadvantage.

Once again, I implore you to include in this waiver request, an eligibility expansion up to at least 138% of the federal poverty level, thereby making Wisconsin eligible for the enhanced FMAP available from the federal government. Anything short of that fails the people of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

JON ERPENBACH

State Senator

27th District"