

Gronik campaign: How Gov. Scott Walker broke: Healthcare in Wisconsin

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MILWAUKEE - The following is the statement of Democratic gubernatorial candidate Andy Gronik with regards to Gov. Scott Walker's record on healthcare:

"Today the words you'll hear from Scott Walker will beg you to believe he cares about affordable healthcare for all Wisconsinites. But, don't listen to his words, judge him by his past actions:

- Rejected more than \$500 million in federal funds available to expand Badgercare for hard-working Wisconsinites — costing taxpayers \$679 million to date. [1][2]
- Refused to add new eligible residents to Medicaid reducing Medicaid rolls by approximately 28,000 [3]
- Forced all parents over 100% of the federal poverty line off of Medicaid and pushed them to purchase private insurance — 87,000 people. [4]

"Walker has made no secret of his disdain for the Affordable Care Act ("ACA") and the concept of affordable health care for all. Let there be no mistake about, whatever Walker concocts to provide the appearance of caring about Wisconsin's most vulnerable, there will be a not so obvious way for his plan to actually benefit his powerful supporters in the insurance and pharmaceutical industries.

"Right now families all over the state (including mine) fear losing their health insurance because of Walker's desire to exclude pre-existing conditions from coverage. While easy for him to say and do as someone covered by government

insurance for most of his adult life, it's not so easy for people like me diagnosed with Crohn's disease in my early 20's and for families like mine with pre-existing conditions.

"Until now, Walker has been outspoken in his support of Republicans in Congress who want to take a bulldozer to the ACA. I, on the other hand, believe in continuous improvement and would never advocate using a bulldozer when a shovel will do.

Sure, improvements are needed to the ACA but we don't have to kill people in the process.

"I believe affordable healthcare is a right and that it's wrong for some people to know if they get sick they'll receive the treatment needed to get better while others presented with identical circumstances could lose their life or life savings. I would have accepted the Medicaid expansion funds that Walker refused had I been governor instead of putting the most vulnerable people in Wisconsin at risk.

"Should healthcare decisions be pushed to the states by a Republican Congress intent upon stripping tens of millions of Americans of coverage, I will lead as governor to work collaboratively to find innovative healthcare solutions that best serve all Wisconsinites affordably. Nothing will be off the table including exploring the expansion of BadgerCare as a single payer option. What I won't do is assume the solution to the healthcare crisis is simple as our current President does. I'd attack the problem from all perspectives, involving stakeholders who are confronted by the challenges of affordable healthcare from very different vantage points. This task force would be made up of patients, nurses, doctors, healthcare providers, pharmaceutical companies, insurance companies, foreign providers, innovators and others so that the comprehensive solution executed by Wisconsin would lead the nation in its quality and effectiveness. Envisioning government managing a risk pool of its residents while the healthcare industry competes for patient services on a basis of quality and patient outcomes is an option worth exploring, too. Together, we'll find the solutions that work best for Wisconsin and everyone who lives here."

Background:

[1] **"With its new two-year budget in place, Wisconsin now has passed up more than \$550 million in federal money available under the Affordable Care Act."** *With millions of dollars at stake, Wisconsin leaders hold fast in opposition to Obamacare*, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Guy Boulton, [8/1/15](#)

[2] **“Already, Wisconsin taxpayers have had to spend \$679 million more than they would have under a full expansion of Medicaid, according to the Legislature’s non-partisan budget office.”** *Wisconsin continues to lose out under Republicans’ Obamacare repeal legislation*, Jason Stein, [6/13/17](#)

[3] **“Expanding Medicaid, Walker says, would have reduced the number of uninsured by 252,000 — about 28,000 more than Walker’s plan”** *Scott Walker rejects billions of federal dollars to expand Wisconsin’s Medicaid program*, Joe Tarr, [2/14/13](#)

[4] **“Meanwhile, about 87,000 adults who are currently enrolled in BadgerCare but make between 100% and 200% of the poverty level will have to go to the insurance exchange”** *Scott Walker rejects billions of federal dollars to expand Wisconsin’s Medicaid program*, Joe Tarr, [2/14/13](#)