

WisDems: Walker has now cost Wisconsin \$1.1 billion by refusing funds to expand badgerCare

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Today, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel [published](#) a new report about how that Scott Walker's position on BadgerCare has cost the state more than a billion dollars. Walker refused to accept the federal money to expand health care in the state and is spending state funds to cover fewer people. As the story notes, that \$1.1 Billion is roughly equivalent to funding the UW system for a year or paying for the entire cost of linking the Marquette and Zoo Interchanges, and could be used to help fund our schools, fix our roads, or increase student aid. But instead of taking the funds, Walker put politics before the good of the state and it's now costing Wisconsin taxpayers dearly.

Read excerpts from the report below.

[Journal Sentinel](#): Cost of Wisconsin's stance on the Affordable Care Act: \$1.1 billion through this fiscal year

One billion dollars is roughly what the state budget allocates each year to the University of Wisconsin System.

It is roughly the cost of linking the Marquette and Zoo Interchanges.

And it is the federal money that Wisconsin has turned away since 2014 because of its unique take on the Affordable Care Act.

Wisconsin is the only state in the country that partially expanded eligibility for Medicaid while not accepting the additional federal dollars available through the law.

The cost: an estimated \$1.1 billion through the fiscal year ending June 30, according to the most recent analysis by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

Gov. Scott Walker and the Legislature's decision is again an issue in a gubernatorial race. Walker stands by his decision. Tony Evers, the Democrat candidate for governor, has said he would accept the federal money available through the law.

...

"The huge sums of federal money we are leaving on the table could be used to strengthen our state by improving schools, increasing student financial aid, filling potholes and many other investments," said Jon Peacock, research director for Kids Forward.

...The \$200 million in potential annual savings from accepting the federal money from the Affordable Care Act could enable the state to double what it pays dentists — and the state still would have \$160 million a year to spend elsewhere.

"That would be huge," Peacock said.

Another example is the state could double financial aid – now about \$143 million a year – for students who are going to state universities and technical schools.

Peacock and other supporters of accepting the federal money can cite others.

"In a nutshell, the approach pushed through by the governor is

costing the state a lot more and accomplishing a lot less,"Peacock said.