

ABC for Health: Applauds Evers “common sense” push for Medicaid expansion

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Interview: Bobby Peterson: (608)444-7197

Madison, WI– This week, Governor Evers said he would put Medicaid Expansion in the State Budget, despite Republican leadership calling it a “non-starter.” “The Evers Administration should explore all options to fully expand BadgerCare Plus to cover more children, parents, and family members and maximize federal funding,” says Bobby Peterson, Public Interest Attorney at ABC for Health.

Peterson continues, “Wisconsin’s partial expansion of Medicaid created a corn maze eligibility process for our state’s kids and families and leaves us all paying more to cover fewer people.” Medicaid Expansion could include about 80,000 more adults between 100-138% FPL covered by BadgerCare Plus. The Expansion yields a net savings for state taxpayers of about \$180-190 million per year. “That frees up more than enough GPR to support Medicaid and other state priorities,” says Peterson. Wisconsin is in the minority of states that refused to take the Medicaid money. Currently, 37 states have accepted federal money (including DC).

Peterson says, “Most Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus programs in Wisconsin operate as a public private partnership where private plans receive monthly payments to help insure enrollees. Wisconsin can expand such partnership coverage options and further promote large scale pooling opportunities, spread risk, and create purchasing leverage that can help drive down costs. Moreover, such efforts can also promote outreach and education, consumer protection, and health plan accountability. The large pool of BadgerCare and Medicaid recipients provides cost effective coverage that lowers the number of uninsured and keeps people out of

expensive, inefficient, and often uncompensated emergency room care.”

“Not only could Wisconsin enroll tens of thousands, we could rebound from past trends of continually dropping children from their health coverage. Wisconsin dropped from 12th lowest rate of uninsured children in 2013 to 20th by 2016,” notes Peterson.

Peterson says, “In Wisconsin, nearly 1.2 million people rely on BadgerCare and Medicaid programs to provide essential, affordable, and effective health care services. And, the impact of these programs reaches thousands more - our friends, neighbors, grandparents, colleagues, and health care providers large and small in every county of Wisconsin.”

Peterson concludes, “We applaud that the Evers Administration made Medicaid Expansion a top priority. This common sense approach of accepting federal Medicaid funds secures more resources for the state AND protects and expands health care and coverage for many Wisconsin children and family members.”

Celebrating 25 years in 2019, ABC for Health, Inc., is a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit, public interest law firm dedicated to linking children and families, particularly those with special health care needs, to health care benefits and services. ABC for Health's mission is to provide information, advocacy tools, legal services, and expert support needed to obtain, maintain, and finance health care coverage and services.