

Sen. Hansen: By denying federal MA money, Republicans are hurting the people they say they represent

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(Madison)—State Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) called on legislative Republicans to work with Governor Evers to accept the return of state taxpayer dollars from the federal government through Medicaid expansion funds arguing that their refusal to do so actually hurts the people they claim to represent.

“Under the expansion program, people earning up to 138% over the poverty line would be eligible to get their health insurance through BadgerCare,” said Hansen. “These are the very people who work hard but aren’t poor enough to receive Medical Assistance and don’t earn enough to afford their own health insurance.”

The non-partisan legislative Fiscal Bureau reported the state would save \$279 million in the current budget if the money is accepted by January 1st of next year.

“That represents major savings for taxpayers that could be used to fund our public schools, reduce the cost of attending a UW school or addressing the significant damage to our environment under the Walker administration.”

Former governor Walker repeatedly refused to accept federal MA money in large part to position himself to campaign for president. Now that he is no longer governor Republicans have no reason to protect his political interests.

“Taking back our tax dollars from the federal government and expanding health care to hard-working families that are falling through the cracks is not only the right

thing to do, but it is extremely popular. It is also one of the many reasons the people chose Governor Evers last fall.”

Republicans continue to try to stoke up fear that Congress will renege on its promise to fund MA expansion but Senator Hansen said that fear is unfounded.

“The only fear that Congress would shift costs for the program onto the state is based on the Republican priority of cutting taxes for the rich and cutting government services for everyone else. Now that the Democrats control the House of Representatives it is highly unlikely any such shift would be approved by Congress.”

“If the Republicans are truly on the side of hard-working families they should support Governor Evers’ efforts to get our tax dollars back and help those families get the health care they need.”