

Opportunity Wisconsin: Gov. Evers, Wisconsin Health Providers lay bare Trump administration failures amid COVID-19 pandemic

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MADISON, Wis. — Yesterday, Gov. Tony Evers joined Wisconsin health care providers for a candid conversation about the state of health care amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants focused on the unique challenges they are facing during this unprecedented health crisis in a conversation hosted by Opportunity Wisconsin and Protect Our Care.

To view the full remarks by Gov. Evers and the ensuing roundtable discussion, [please click here.](#)

Moderated by State Rep. Jodi Emerson, the roundtable discussion among health care providers made clear that the Trump administration has failed to adequately respond to the pandemic, and that ongoing efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would only exacerbate the challenges facing Wisconsin families.

“At a time when everyone needs to be able to have access to health care and stop the spread of a communicable disease, we’re seeing our federal administration actively working to take down the Affordable Care Act,” noted Emerson, referring to the Trump administration’s ongoing effort to invalidate the ACA via the Supreme

Court.

“It feels 100 percent irresponsible to get rid of the ACA with absolutely no plan to replace it,” added Dr. Lori Whitis. “There’s a huge disconnect in understanding of reality.”

Working- and middle-class Wisconsinites have long struggled with access to affordable health insurance. Today, 15.5 million Americans have already lost or are at risk of losing their health coverage because they or their family members have lost work due to COVID-19.

In remarks setting the stage for the conversation by providers, Gov. Evers noted that, “It was 3 years ago that Senator John McCain cast his famous thumbs down vote on repealing the Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately here we are 3 years later, and in the middle of a global pandemic no less, and Republicans are still trying to repeal health care for millions of Americans including 2.4 million Wisconsinites who like me have pre-existing conditions.”

Providers also discussed the need to expand BadgerCare, the state’s public health care program for low-income residents, and deliver personal protective equipment (PPE) to front-line health care workers.

“In other states where Medicaid has been expanded, they’re able to come in and see health professionals without the worry that they’re going to be bankrupted by it,” said Dr. Jeff Huebner of the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health. “And they’re going to be able to afford the care that they need, the tests they need, the treatment they need.”

“I always knew that I would probably have to work in a pandemic,” remarked Dr. Julia Kyle. “Never in a million years did I think that in the United States of America, I would be wearing the same surgical mask for days.”

For interview requests of the health care providers who participated, please contact press@opportunitywisconsin.com

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