

# Opportunity Wisconsin: American rescue plan lowers healthcare premiums by nearly \$600 for Wisconsinites

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**MADISON, Wis.**— As a result of the American Rescue Plan that became law this month, Badger State residents will pay nearly \$600 less for health insurance, according to a [new report](#) released today by Opportunity Wisconsin. The report also finds that nearly 52,000 uninsured residents are now eligible for tax credits when purchasing insurance. The full report can be viewed [here](#) and is posted below.

*“This report shows how the American Rescue Plan is paying immediate dividends for Wisconsinites—by reducing premiums and providing significant tax credits to help residents get access to care,”* **said Meghan Roh, Opportunity Wisconsin Program Director.** *“COVID-19 has exacerbated disparities in healthcare coverage and has raised longstanding concerns about costs. Thankfully, this new law alleviates that burden by lowering premiums and expanding access to healthcare for Wisconsinites.”*

Yesterday, Opportunity Wisconsin and [Protect Our Care](#) Wisconsin sat down with two Badger State physicians on [Facebook LIVE](#) to discuss the progress being made in the fight against the pandemic and how the American Rescue Plan is making healthcare more affordable and accessible.

**Dr. Julia Kyle, a pediatric and primary care physician at Confluence Healthcare in Eau Claire,** talked about the healthcare savings many of her patients will see thanks to the American Rescue Plan: *“It’s a make or break. That may be a month’s rent payment. That’s food for a couple of months. For a diabetic,*

*that's a couple months of insulin.”*

## **Report: How the American Rescue Plan Lowers Healthcare Costs in the Badger State**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated disparities in healthcare coverage and has raised longstanding concerns about costs. The American Rescue Plan helps alleviate that burden by lowering premiums and expanding access to healthcare for Wisconsinites.

### **Lower Marketplace Premiums**

Nobody should go without healthcare, especially during a global pandemic. That is why, starting April 1st, the American Rescue Plan builds on the success of the Affordable Care Act by expanding access to tax credits for the uninsured and reducing costs for those who already have healthcare. The law also provides subsidies to cover 100 percent of the cost of COBRA coverage for those who are unemployed but want to stay on their employer provided health insurance.

#### *Impact on Wisconsin*

- The average premium on a Benchmark Silver plan on the ACA exchange in Wisconsin will [drop](#) by \$580.
- 51,900 uninsured Wisconsinites are now [eligible](#) for tax credits on the ACA exchange, 31,600 of whom are now eligible for \$0 dollar benchmark Marketplace coverage.
- ARP [lowers](#) marketplace premiums in Wisconsin for those 400 percent above the poverty line, which is split up here based on age group:

State	45-year-old individual; \$60,000 (470% FPL*)			60-year-old couple; \$75,000 (435% FPL*)			Family of four;** \$120,000 (458% FPL*)		
	Prior law	Under American Rescue Plan Act ***	Difference	Prior law	Under American Rescue Plan Act	Difference	Prior law	Under American Rescue Plan Act	Difference
Wisconsin	516	425	-91	1,941	531	-1,410	1,461	850	-611

### **Medicaid Expansion**

Wisconsin has already expanded Medicaid coverage to all residents below the poverty line. However, Wisconsin has not taken advantage of the federal funding match by expanding Medicaid under the ACA, which requires states to cover people

up to 133% of the poverty level. This has created budgetary and coverage issues for the state. The American Rescue Plan offers states like Wisconsin a **95 percent funding match** if they agree to fully expand Medicaid under the ACA. This is a 5 percent increase over the funding match that has been available to states since the ACA was passed. As a result, expanding Medicaid would reduce premiums, expand coverage, and save the state money.

### *Impact on Wisconsin*

- Even with the limited coverage gap due to BadgerCare, Medicaid expansion would [reduce](#) the number of uninsured Wisconsinites by 16 percent and expand coverage to 120,000 people.
- The state is [foregoing](#) \$1.1 billion in federal funding every year by refusing to expand Medicaid.
- Medicaid expansion would [reduce premiums](#) for Wisconsinites with private insurance by moving less healthy individuals over to Medicaid plans.
- Adult enrollment in Wisconsin Medicaid [grew by](#) nearly 23,000 people in the spring of 2020, due to the spread of COVID-19 and the job losses that followed.
- As of May 2020, there were 175,893 non-disabled adults without minor children [who had coverage](#) under Wisconsin Medicaid.