

U.S. Reps. Kind, Moore: Help introduce legislation to expand quality, affordable health care coverage to Wisconsinites

Posted on Thursday, Jul 22, 2021

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Washington, DC —Yesterday, **Reps. Ron Kind (WI-03)** and **Gwen Moore (WI-04)** helped introduce the *Medicaid Saves Lives Act*. This legislation will provide access to health care coverage for the millions of Americans living in states that have so far refused to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Wisconsin is one of just 12 states—and the only state in the Midwest—that haven't taken the expansion. Closing this coverage gap will help improve health outcomes, prevent premature deaths, reduce hospital and provider closures by reducing uncompensated care costs, and expand access to preventative health services.

“For too long, the Wisconsin State Legislature has refused to put the health and wellbeing of Wisconsinites first and accept available federal funds to expand BadgerCare,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “This is just plain wrong. Health care is too important to Wisconsin families to be treated like a political football, and it’s time to stop the partisan games. I’m proud to help introduce the Medicaid Saves Lives Act to save taxpayer dollars, support our rural hospitals, and ensure all Wisconsinites have access to quality, affordable health care.”

“Today, I am proud to join my colleagues in introducing the Medicaid Saves Lives Act, which would create an option to help Wisconsinites and millions of other Americans to access affordable health care through Medicaid in states that have refused to take the federal funding, helping close the Medicaid coverage gap and

secure essential care,” said **Rep. Gwen Moore**. “Wisconsin’s GOP-led legislature has time and again refused to expand Medicaid, including in the recently completed state budget. The American Rescue Plan included funds to encourage states like Wisconsin to expand their program, but Wisconsin legislators are still sitting on their hands, willing to leave \$1 billion on the table for our state to make a political point. There’s no other way to put it: it’s stuck on stupid, waiting on dumb to come! These political games only hurt our constituents who would otherwise have access to quality health care. This deadly pandemic has only reiterated the need improve access to health care. I will continue working to make health care more affordable and accessible for all Wisconsinites.”

“Earlier this month, Wisconsin’s GOP legislature once again failed to bring BadgerCare Expansion to Wisconsin,” said **Breana Stanley of Eau Claire**. “Especially during one of the most stressful and scary times in recent memory, when we are dealing with a global health crisis, the decision to leave tens of thousands of Wisconsinites without affordable health care is immoral. I thank Representatives Ron Kind and Gwen Moore for stepping up to support the health of people in our community by cosponsoring the Medicaid Saves Lives Act. This lifesaving bill would close the Medicaid affordability gap in western Wisconsin.”

Although the *American Rescue Plan* offered the 12 states that did not expand Medicaid under the *Affordable Care Act* financial incentives to expand their Medicaid programs, they have so far refused to do so. This means that 4.4 million Americans will continue to be denied health coverage as we work to build back from the COVID-19 pandemic. The *Medicaid Saves Lives Act* will address the coverage gap for those living in non-expansion states like Wisconsin by creating a federal Medicaid look-alike program that is run and administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and provides the same full benefits of Medicaid. Because Congress already paid for Medicaid expansion in the *Affordable Care Act*, the *Medicaid Saves Lives Act* has already been funded and should not require additional offsets.

Reps. Kind and Moore serve on the Ways and Means Committee, the most powerful – and the oldest – committee in the House of Representatives. It has jurisdiction over tax measures, the management of public debt, trade and tariff laws, Social Security, Medicare, pensions, and many other economic growth measures.