

ACS CAN: Governor's veto of medicaid restriction bills protects patients from harmful barriers to care

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Madison, Wis. – April 15, 2022 – Today, Governor Tony Evers vetoed two bills that would have tightened access to health care coverage for limited-income Wisconsinites. Senate Bill 905/Assembly Bill 934 aimed to require Medicaid enrollees to prove eligibility and re-apply every six months. Senate Bill 912/Assembly Bill 936 would have added new work rules to the program, stripping Medicaid benefits from cancer patients and others if they weren't able to accept offers of full-time employment or work more hours.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nation's leading cancer advocacy organization, strongly opposed both bills and commends Gov. Evers for rejecting legislation that would have put in place burdensome monitoring of the income boundary of BadgerCare and proposed frequent re-determinations which could result in loss of access to affordable health care coverage for our friends and neighbors.

Medicaid is critical in the fight against cancer as thousands of Wisconsinites depend on the program for cancer prevention, early detection, treatment and survivorship care services. In Wisconsin, over 37,300 people will be diagnosed with cancer this year.

“Adding unnecessary, harmful barriers to this lifesaving program is counterintuitive to the direction legislators should be taking especially as we continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. We are trying to expand access to affordable, quality health

care through BadgerCare, not make it harder for Wisconsinites to gain coverage,” said Sara Sahli, government relations director for ACS CAN in Wisconsin.

ACS CAN opposes adding work requirements as a condition of eligibility for health care coverage because cancer patients and survivors and those who will be diagnosed with cancer or other chronic diseases could be physically unable to comply.

“No one should be denied access to timely, comprehensive and affordable care because they are incapable of holding a job due to the health effects caused by their disease or treatment,” said Sahli.

For more information on how ACS CAN volunteers across Wisconsin are helping defeat cancer, reduce health inequities and improve health outcomes, visit fightcancer.org/WI.