

Citizen Action of Wisconsin: Says GOP Medicaid bills are an attack on hardworking Wisconsinites

Posted on Thursday, Feb 17, 2022

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Madison, Wis. – Below is a statement from Dr. Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin, on two Republican-sponsored bills regarding Medicaid enrollment.

“Today the State Assembly will vote on two bills that would move Wisconsin backwards at the expense of hardworking Wisconsinites,” said Robert Kraig, Executive Director of Citizen Action of Wisconsin. “AB 934 and AB 936 will dramatically increase the administrative burden on both the State and already hard pressed BadgerCare enrollees, force people off their health coverage during an ongoing global pandemic, and put people dealing with long-term disabilities at particular risk.”

“AB 934 adds administrative burdens we would never accept in our daily lives. For no good reason, it would require people enrolled in BadgerCare to reapply every six months as if for the first time – forcing them to submit information the State already has, doubling the paperwork and multiplying the risk of error. This could result in coverage being taken away for six months. People living with physical and mental disabilities are particularly vulnerable to administrative errors in the application process and face potentially dire health consequences if left without health coverage.”

“AB 936 would punish BadgerCare enrollees who perform important, low-wage jobs, including many front line workers during the pandemic, by forcing them into the BadgerCare coverage gap where they are required to make the impossible choice between being uninsured, or buying health insurance that cost more than the slight increase in wages they have earned. This bill will not result in an influx of worker hours in the economy. Rather, it will harm good, hardworking people in our communities and tear at a foundational function in our society – caregiving. Professional care workers who support the elderly and people with disabilities earn poverty wages. Many paid caregivers are only able to stay in the field because of BadgerCare eligibility. Forcing these workers into the BadgerCare gap could result in a mass exodus of care workers, exasperating the already serious caregiver shortage. Likewise, family caregivers are often forced to work part time jobs to accommodate their care responsibilities at home. Forcing these caregivers to work additional hours could have serious detrimental effects on the wellbeing of their loved ones.”