

# Rep. Shelton: Legislative Democrats and community partners introduce the BadgerCare Public Option Act

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VIRTUAL – In a virtual press conference this morning, legislative Democrats and community partners from Citizen Action and Main Street Alliance introduced the BadgerCare Public Option Act, a bill to create a state-based online insurance marketplace under the ACA, provide coverage for small groups of 50 employees or less and offer a Basic Health Plan for childless individuals making between 133-200% of the Federal Poverty Line. On the bill’s release, legislators offered the following statements:

**Rep Kristina Shelton** (D-Green Bay):

“Access to affordable, high quality healthcare is vital to building a healthier and more equitable Wisconsin. The BadgerCare Public Option Act is in part about savings – moving away from a healthcare system that is driven by profit and instead, prioritizing the health and wellness of every day Wisconsinites. The other part is access – his bill not only increases the amount of people in our state eligible for insurance coverage, it will make getting information and access to healthcare options easier for all.”

**Rep Supreme Moore Omokunde** (D-Milwaukee):

“As we come to the end of year 2 of the COVID-19 pandemic, high-quality health coverage remains unobtainable for far too many Wisconsinites. Many folks living just above the Federal Poverty Line are uninsured or under-insured or pay for health care coverage they often cannot afford to utilize. And when private health insurance companies continually raise their costs, these are the people who suffer most. This

is why I am proud to co-author the BadgerCare Public Option Act: to advance a more equitable health care system here in Wisconsin and hopefully provide some peace of mind for hard-working Wisconsinites.

**Senator LaTonya Johnson** (D-Milwaukee):

“I’m proud to continue this work from 2017 to expand access to health care for Wisconsin families. Passing the BadgerCare Public Option bill will have a positive impact on our state by increasing the overall health and wellbeing of our communities. This bill will provide more health care coverage opportunities for individuals and allow small businesses to better support their workers. It is a win for health care access and for our state’s economic wellbeing.”

**Senator Chris Larson** (D-Milwaukee):

“With a \$3.8 billion budget surplus and a \$1.7 billion rainy day fund, we’re out of excuses not to close the gap between which of our neighbors can afford health coverage and those who have it. In a sane world, this bill would be the conservative solution. Instead, we have two political parties – The Democratic Party, which views healthcare as a right, and the Republican Party, which sued to block pandemic protections while over 944,000 Americans died of COVID, and would rather make people pee in a cup to prove they deserve healthcare rather than work to expand coverage to everyone.”