Gov. Evers: Joins Wisconsinites to mark the 13-Year anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

Posted on Thursday, Mar 23, 2023

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WISCONSIN — Today, Governor Tony Evers and Wisconsinites who have benefitted from the Affordable Care Act joined Protect Our Care and Citizen Action to highlight the 13th anniversary of the landmark health care legislation.

Speakers explained how they – and the state as a whole – have benefitted from the law, which expanded access to quality, affordable health care. The historic legislation eliminated lifetime caps, expanded Medicaid, and secured protections for millions of people living with pre-existing conditions.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) built on the strong foundation of the ACA by lowering premiums for middle and working class families by an average of $2,400 a year. Thanks to the ACA, more than 21 million Americans have gained coverage through Medicaid expansion, and Medicaid has become a pillar of the American healthcare system, demonstrating the overwhelming need and desire for affordable health coverage.

Still, Republicans in Wisconsin refuse to expand Medicaid, leaving many Wisconsinites without access to affordable health care.

Thanks to the ACA, health plans are also required to cover preventive care services without cost-sharing. Access to preventive care has improved health outcomes and reduced economic inequity. The ACA has helped reduce longstanding disparities in coverage rates, improving health care access for children, rural Americans, people with disabilities, and people of color across the nation.

Speakers also highlighted [ongoing Republican attacks on health care](#), and celebrated how President Biden and Democrats in Congress have made historic investments to strengthen health care.

Katerina Klawes has benefitted from many of the provisions in the ACA, and has purchased her health insurance through the Obamacare marketplace for years. She noted that just "one of the emergency medications used to treat my blood disorder, which is similar to hemophila, can cost $1.58 million for one person's lifetime." Klawes used the opportunity to "thank those fighting to keep healthcare costs low."

Chad Holmes, from Wausau, also purchases health insurance through the exchange and is certain he'd never have paid off the medical debt accrued through two emergency hospital stays in 2020 without the ACA. Thanks to annual caps on out of pocket costs, Holmes was recently able to pay the last outstanding bill associated with the stays.

Mary, a retired nurse from SE Wisconsin, and her husband both found coverage on the marketplace before becoming eligible for Medicare. She was pleasantly surprised to receive a sizeable rebate from the insurer she purchased that plan from because they did not meet the ACA's "80-20" requirement.

Today's 13th Anniversary of the ACA being signed into law also is the day the North Carolina legislature finally adopted Medicaid Expansion, making them the 40th state to do so. Wisconsin is now one of just 10 states that have declined the expansion that would have brought billions in federal funds back to Wisconsin.

During the event, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers made clear he is not backing down from his push to include BadgerCare expansion in the state budget, saying:

"Expanding BadgerCare would provide healthcare coverage to nearly 90,000 Wisconsinites, including about 30,000 who are currently uninsured, while improving health outcomes and drawing down more than $2 billion in federal funds and saving our state more than $1.6 billion over the biennium. That's money that could then be reinvested in the health, well-being, and success of our people and our state—like supporting moms and babies, reducing health disparities, and helping those with substance use disorders get the treatment and support they need to get better. That's a win-win-win for Wisconsin just like it has been for states across our country."

You can watch the event here, and learn more about how the Affordable Care Act has strengthened health care here.