

WisDems: “Medicare and Medicaid anniversary marred by GOP intransigence”

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MADISON, Wis. — Yesterday, on the 58th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, [Rep. Mike Bare](#) outlined the stark differences between Democrats fighting to lower health care costs and strengthen critical programs like Medicare and Medicaid, and Republicans from Wisconsin to Washington, who are waging a war on health care by blocking Medicaid expansion and trying to repeal popular health care cost-saving provisions.

The Cap Times, Rep. Mike Bare Opinion: [Medicare and Medicaid anniversary marred by GOP intransigence](#)

This week marks the 58th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, which extended affordable health coverage to millions of seniors and those living on fixed incomes, allowing them to live with a sense of dignity and security.

Today nearly 160 million Americans — and more than 2.6 million Wisconsinites—have access to the health care they need thanks to Medicare and Medicaid programs.

And yet there is more that can be done to extend affordable health coverage to more Wisconsinites. Stubborn Republicans in the Legislature are standing in the way.

Dozens of states have expanded Medicaid since the passage of the Affordable Care Act. Many of them expanded with bipartisan support. But not Wisconsin.

Here the stubborn Republicans have caused 90,000 Wisconsinites to either pay more or go uninsured, and cost taxpayers nearly \$2.7 billion and counting. Employers have been taxed more. Our tax dollars are going to other states. Medical debt is rising. Hospitals and health providers are having trouble making their finances work.

We are embarrassingly one of just 10 states that have failed to expand. We could cover more people, lower the cost of health coverage and save tax dollars if Republicans and Democrats work together on a bipartisan expansion.

In the past two years, President Joe Biden and Democrats in Washington — including Sen. Tammy Baldwin and Reps. Mark Pocan and Gwen Moore — have fought to bring down health care costs, and we're already seeing results. Medicare is being strengthened, prescription drug costs are being capped and health care premiums are being lowered. The work started in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson when he signed Medicare and Medicaid into law is still moving forward.

But Republicans are blocking Medicaid expansion in Wisconsin and trying to weaken Medicare and repeal cost-saving provisions in Washington.

The difference is stark.

We must reelect Biden and Baldwin next year and elect Democrats down the ticket to not only safeguard but expand Wisconsinites' access to the care they need.