



WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**MELISSA SARGENT**

48th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 30, 2013

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## **BadgerCare Expansion at the County Level Still on the Table**

*Plan would encourage innovation and insure more Wisconsinites*

Today marks the 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Social Security Act being signed into law which established Medicare and Medicaid. These programs help hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites receive access to health care each year. Despite these programs being a vital lifeline for our most vulnerable citizens, Governor Walker did not include the Medicaid expansion in our recent state budget. However, this money is still on the table to accept, should the GOP put aside their partisan posturing. Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) today called on the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to serve as a pass through for the BadgerCare expansion at the county level, as was recently done in Cuyahoga County in Ohio.

“Our bought and sold GOP Governor and Legislature continue to refuse to see the merits of accepting the BadgerCare expansion dollars,” said Rep. Sargent. “This refusal in Wisconsin leads to a loss of billions of federal dollars, the failure to create thousands of family sustaining jobs and the simple immorality of not covering close to 200,000 Wisconsinites.

“All of this simply means we must be creative and leave no stone unturned. As a Wisconsin State Representative and County Board Supervisor I implore DHS to grant a waiver that would allow Wisconsin's counties to participate in a Medicaid demonstration project that brings BadgerCare expansion at the county level in order to provide healthcare access and quality care for our citizens.”

County Board Supervisors from 20 counties across Wisconsin delivered a letter today to DHS Secretary Kitty Rhodes, requesting a demonstration pilot project that would allow interested counties the opportunity to access these federal enhanced Medicaid funds in order to fully benefit from our federal tax dollars, and help individuals up to 133% of the federal poverty level. Like Wisconsin, Ohio has not currently taken advantage of the federal enhanced Medicaid funding at a state level, the innovative local effort in Cuyahoga County will continue to provide access to care to an estimated 30,000 of their citizens.

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