



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Legislators Hope Wisconsin can Move to Iowa Model for Strengthening BadgerCare

Madison – Two years ago, Governor Walker and Republicans in the legislature changed the eligibility requirements for Wisconsin’s bi-partisan BadgerCare program, eliminating coverage for around 77,000 Wisconsinites. For these people struggling to make it into the middle class who relied on BadgerCare to keep them and their families healthy, this was a devastating blow. Today, Representative Daniel Riemer (D—Milwaukee) and Senator Jon Erpenbach (D—Middleton) are circulating a bill that will guarantee health coverage to more than 80,000 uninsured Wisconsinites while saving Wisconsin hundreds of millions of dollars, greatly reducing the threatening budget deficit.

“For the tens of thousands of Wisconsinites who lost health insurance or remain uninsured, access to affordable health care provides economic stability and a secure and healthy future. This is a win for those families and individuals who would not face bankruptcy or crippling financial hardship due to a medical emergency, because they would gain access under this plan,” said Representative Daniel Riemer. “This is also a win for the state of Wisconsin. The savings realized under this plan can help strengthen our universities and our public schools, which face devastating budget cuts due to Wisconsin’s deficit.”

Modeled after Republican Governor Terry Brandstad’s plan in Iowa—the *Iowa Health and Wellness Plan*—the proposal would require the Department of Health Services to establish a premium assistance program to pay premiums and cost-sharing amounts from money allocated for Medicaid to help people purchase coverage under a Health Care Marketplace qualified plan. The Wisconsin proposed plan is expected to cover 81,000 people. The proposal would result in a GPR savings of \$241.4 million in the 2015-2017 budget.

“Wisconsin is missing out. Our taxpayers are being shortchanged in federal money because of partisan political stubbornness. Regardless, we are willing to keep trying to come back with something that Governor Walker and the Republicans in the Legislature can support because it is simply the fiscally responsible and morally responsible thing to do,” said Senator Jon Erpenbach.

Wisconsin’s version of the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan will be circulated for support amongst Legislators starting today and will be introduced in the next few weeks.

For more information on the Iowa plan: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/about/iowa-health-and-wellness-plan>

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