



DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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Republicans Will Kill Medicaid Expansion

Move denies health care for thousands of Wisconsinites, forgoing \$1.6 billion of federal funding

MADISON, WI – In a memo released by the Co-Chairs of the Joint Finance Committee late Wednesday afternoon, Republicans announced that their first motion on the 2019-2021 state budget will discard 131 of Governor Evers’ budget proposals, including his popular and fiscally beneficial Medicaid expansion proposal. The Governor’s proposal would provide Medicaid to 82,000 additional Wisconsinites, bring in \$1.6 billion federal dollars, and save the state \$324 million dollars. The state savings and additional federal dollars are then invested in expanding health care access for the elderly and individuals with disabilities, in dental care, behavioral and mental health supports, Medicaid reimbursement rates for health care providers, pay for personal care workers, and a host of other desperately needed health care services.

A recent Marquette University Law Poll, found that an overwhelming 70% of Wisconsinites support Medicaid expansion. Thirty-six states, including Republican controlled states like Louisiana, Kentucky, and Montana, have expanded Medicaid. Had Republicans accepted Medicaid expansion in 2014, Wisconsin would have attracted \$2.7 billion in federal funds, and reaped over \$1 billion in state savings.

In response to this sweeping removal of Medicaid expansion and 131 other budget provisions, Democratic members of the Joint Finance Committee released the following statements:

“Once again, Republican legislators are not listening to the people of this state,” said Rep. Chris Taylor. “At all of the public hearings on the budget throughout the state, Medicaid expansion and the additional access to dental care, behavioral and mental health services, and increased wages for caregivers were overwhelmingly supported by Wisconsinites. Republican legislators are putting politics over people once again.”

“By refusing to discuss full Medicaid expansion and 131 other provisions, the Republicans on the Joint Finance Committee are guilty of the very crime they keep accusing the Governor of committing—failing to debate and discuss important issues,” said Rep. Evan Goyke. “They are acting unilaterally and without the support of Wisconsinites, who approve of full Medicaid expansion.”

“Republicans are throwing away \$1.6 billion throughout our health care system, that was designated to help the most vulnerable in our society, for purely political reasons,” said Senator LaTonya Johnson. “Even after traveling around the state and listening to the overwhelming support for Medicaid expansion, they refuse to even consider the needs of the people.”

“Republicans have rejected what, by their own admission, was the number one issue brought up at our public hearings,” said Senator Jon Erpenbach. “By rejecting the Medicaid Expansion they are turning away \$1.6 billion in investments in the well-being of Wisconsin, and each and every one of them will have to explain to their constituents why they don’t think they deserve affordable health care.”

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