

House Republican health care leader issues statement challenging Inslee and Kreidler complaints against health care reform

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3/16/2017



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2017

CONTACT: [Brendon Wold, Deputy Communications Director](mailto:brendon.wold@house.wa.gov) | 360-786-7698

‘Releasing incomplete information and utilizing scare tactics is not helpful,’ says Schmick

Rep. Joe Schmick, R-Colfax, and ranking Republican on the House Health Care Committee, issued the following statement today on federal health care reform efforts:

“Everyone knows that Obamacare is failing in critical areas and that it must be rescued at the federal level with reforms. Among those failures are escalating health insurance premiums, fewer health care choices for patients and companies leaving the exchanges. This current system is simply not sustainable. Our governor, who voted for Obamacare while he was in Congress, is doubling down on this failed system and is now promoting information that, at best, is incomplete.

“The House Republicans in Congress have put forward the American Health Care Act. Like major pieces of public policy we see come through the Legislature, I expect this proposal to change and improve as it moves forward. It’s important to let the process play out and provide facts so people understand the debate.

“I believe there are some very good things contained in the American Health Care Act. First, it would encourage free markets and fair competition, which would lower health care costs. Second, it would provide tax relief to every American. Third, it would continue to protect people with pre-existing conditions. Fourth, it would return power back to the states and provide them with more flexibility for innovation, rather than having the other Washington dictate how individuals purchase their own health care. Finally, it would be fiscally responsible and reduce the federal deficit.

“A lot has been made about the Congressional Budget Office’s report and the possibility of more people becoming uninsured. The report says 14 million more people would be uninsured. However, according to the CBO, most of these people would be the result of the individual mandate being repealed. We have to remember that these are people who were forced to buy a product. Without this mandate, fewer people may choose to have health insurance. The report further states that five million are potential enrollees from states that had been considering expanding their Medicaid populations but now won’t. This is old-fashioned government logic where nixing a proposed government increase is viewed as a cut.

“Governor Inslee and Insurance Commissioner Kreidler have also said that more than 700,000 Washingtonians would lose their health insurance. This faulty number assumes the majority of our state’s expansion population will stop receiving benefits, which is a huge assumption. The ninety percent match rate provided by the federal government for these expanded populations will continue under the proposed legislation. Why would the state make any changes to the expansion population when the federal government has promised to continue the current level of support with no end in sight?

“I encourage Governor Inslee and Insurance Commissioner Kreidler to be forthcoming and provide the whole story as this important debate continues in our state and around the country. Releasing incomplete information and utilizing scare tactics is not helpful. Let’s gather all the facts, share them, and see how this issue plays out in our nation’s capital. I encourage everyone to be a part of this process.”

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Washington State House Republican Communications

houserepublicans.wa.gov

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