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May 23, 2014

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senate  
717 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin:

Today, a net of nearly 19,000 more people have access to health care through Medicaid than did prior to this year. As part of our plan for the state, everyone living in poverty now has access to health care through Medicaid.

Under my predecessor Governor Jim Doyle, there was actually a waiting list for access to health care for many people living in poverty. Now, the list is gone. And nearly 82,000 people living in poverty now have health care through Medicaid because of our reforms.

For those above that level, they are able to access health care through the marketplace—as part of the federal exchange or through traditional coverage. We sent you a more than 1,600-page report documenting all of the ways that our administration has worked with stakeholders from across the state to ease the transition into this marketplace.

The documents we previously provided to you show how aggressively the state government worked to make the transition a success. If, as your letter suggests, you have further questions about the ability of people to sign up through the exchange, I suggest you direct your attention into one of two areas:

First, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the agency responsible for the federal exchange under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As we know, the rollout of the program was problematic at the federal level.

Last year, we worked with members of the Wisconsin State Legislature to push back the transition into the marketplace because HHS did not have the exchanges fully operational by the start of 2014. I didn't want people to slip between the cracks because of the initial failures of the federal government.

Second, the ongoing problems with state exchanges, as well as problems with the federal exchange, suggest there may be problems with the law itself. Why else are there so many issues with exchanges across the country?

As you know, the State of Wisconsin is operating within the parameters of the ACA, as upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court. Since the individuals who are part of the transition are eligible for the federal exchange, it only seems logical that concerns about their ultimate status be directed to HHS, which operates the exchange, or to a critical review of the law itself. Clearly, your status as a member of the United States Senate should enable you to successfully direct this comprehensive review.

Thank you again for your letter.

Sincerely,



Scott Walker  
Governor