



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

October 31, 2013

Governor Scott Walker
Office of the Governor
115 East State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Walker:

In light of the problems at the national level with www.healthcare.gov and enrollment in the Health Insurance Marketplace, I urge you to delay the implementation of the BadgerCare changes, which are scheduled to go into effect January 1, 2014.

Approximately 92,000 people will lose BadgerCare coverage on January 1, 2014. The rationale supporting the decision to end coverage for these individuals was that they would be able to purchase insurance coverage through the federal market place exchanges, prior to the termination of their BadgerCare coverage.

Due to the problems associated with the launch of the federal program, it is clear that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for these 92,000 people to obtain insurance coverage through the federal marketplace prior to December 15, 2013 which would provide coverage for them beginning January 1, 2014.

Even if the problems with the federal system are resolved by the end of November, individuals would only have two weeks to obtain coverage, which would be very difficult.

The simple solution to this problem is to postpone implementation of all BadgerCare changes until March 31, 2014, when the Marketplace enrollment period ends. This action would be consistent with the intent of the action taken by the Joint Finance Committee when it amended the Budget Bill. The Joint Finance amendment would delay the changes to the Badger Care program for 90 days “if, by October 15, 2013 DHS has not received a certification of an American health benefit exchange...if such certification is required under federal law.”

I am unaware of the state receiving any such certification or of the federal government issuing one. Nevertheless, the intent of the amendment is clear: if the federal exchange is not working properly, BadgerCare recipients should not lose their coverage.

The purpose of this letter is not to argue the merits of the Affordable Care Act, or your proposed changes to BadgerCare. I am simply asking you to delay the changes to BadgerCare to ensure that the health and well-being of some of the most vulnerable people in our state are protected in this time of uncertainty.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Barrett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "T".

Tom Barrett
Mayor