

North Idaho leaders agree: Lawmakers should say no to Obamacare implementation

POST FALLS, Idaho – A group of north Idaho political and business leaders agreed unanimously Wednesday that Idaho should avoid creating a state health insurance exchange and should instead wait for the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on the Obamacare lawsuit of which Idaho is a plaintiff.

The leaders unanimously backed a resolution that says, in part, that "it is not in the best interest of the state for any state official to participate in planning or establishing health insurance exchanges as provided for in the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act" and that Congress should "defund planning grants to the states for the establishment of PPACA health insurance exchanges by the states."

The resolution is signed by members of the major political groups in north Idaho including Tea Party, Pachyderm clubs, Reagan Republicans, United Conservatives of North Idaho, North Idaho Political Action Committee, Kootenai County Republicans and Kootenai County Republican Women.

The state Legislature is expected to consider proposals this month to establish a state health insurance exchange and to consider spending \$20 million from a federal grant to get Idaho's health insurance exchange up and running. But opponents of the plan say a state exchange would merely have the superficial appearance of being under Idaho control but would be subject to federal regulations. They also point out that legislative action in 2012 would enshrine Obamacare into Idaho law even before the U.S. Supreme Court has had a chance to issue its ruling, expected this summer.

Twenty people, listed below, signed the resolution. The titles of the signers are provided for reference only. In most cases, the people listed were speaking as individuals and not for the groups they represent. Signers of the resolution are:

Luke Sommer, President, Panhandle Pachyderm Club
Jeff Ward, President, Kootenai County Reagan Republicans
Brad Corkill, mill owner, NIPAC member
Angela M. Cross, Kootenai County Republican
John Cross, Kootenai County Republican
Brent Regan, businessman and Tea Party representative
Jim Pierce, NIPAC member and GOP Precinct Committeeman
Roger Benoit, Vice Chairman, Legislative District 3
Kellie Palm, Kootenai County Republican Women
Ron Mendive, United Conservatives of North Idaho
Maggie Lyons, businesswoman and NIPAC member
Pamela Stout, President, Sandpoint Patriots
Gary Brown, President and Founder, Reach America, Inc.
Tina Jacobson, Chairman, Kootenai County Republicans

Tony Wisniewski, Vice Chairman, Kootenai County Republicans
Carl Stout, Sandpoint Patriots
Jim Hollingsworth, building contractor and Tea Party member
Vaughn Ward, meeting facilitator
Ron Nilson, businessman and NIPAC member
Melanie Vander Feer, United Conservatives of North Idaho
Robert D. Brooke, President, North Idaho Pachyderm Club
