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**Idaho Solution is Only Way for Affordable and Accessible Health Care for Idahoans  
By Lt. Governor Brad Little**

Obamacare has not worked for Idahoans. Since Obamacare has become law, premiums have gone up exorbitantly, without a corresponding increase in quality of health care. Last month's release of 2018 state insurance premium rates — with an average increase of nearly 30 percent — confirm this reality.

Although Idaho has few state mandates, or government-imposed regulations, federal mandates have made healthcare more and more unaffordable. Despite its good intentions, Congress held the incorrect belief that the federal government knows best and could unilaterally reform a very complicated system.

This summer Congress had the opportunity to tackle health care reform that could help lower costs—unwinding federal meddling and setting new rules that worked for states. They failed. Work may continue in Congress, but I am skeptical. Democrats now seem to think the answer is a single-payer health care, which nonpartisan research groups have said would raise federal government spending by \$32 trillion over ten years. Paying for this would require astronomical tax increases and more federal borrowing. This proposal comes while the federal debt passes \$20 trillion!

Before Obamacare, Idahoans had one of the most affordable health care options in America. Like our favorable business and tax climate, and conservative approach to government, lower health care costs gave Idaho a competitive edge.

Ultimately, the best solution for Idahoans will be an Idaho solution. We cannot wait. We must act and build our own framework for lower health care costs for each and every Idahoan. We must get back to the position we were in before Obamacare. We must build on our state foundation— finding solutions that work for families' and small businesses' bottom lines, provides greater access and affordability, and does the morally right thing for those who have chronic illness or pre-existing conditions.

We must return to our Idaho high risk insurance pool. My family has our own experiences with Idaho's high-risk pool. I know firsthand that our high-risk pool has created opportunities for those with pre-existing conditions to remain in Idaho, or the opportunity to return home to work and raise their families.

We are already acting on many different fronts. Idaho is now pursuing waiver options in this uncertain and complex environment which will provide greater access and affordability. We need to demand the federal government allow an Idaho solution to healthcare, one that gets us back to where we once were prior to the failed policies and over-regulation of Obamacare.

Idahoans know best how to improve our health care system. I am confident if Idaho acts on a state-level approach— building an Idaho solution for Idahoans— we can be a bright example across the United States.

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