



House of Representatives State of Idaho

MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIRMAN

Republicans Set to Introduce Legislation to Reform Health Care in Idaho

BOISE, ID – A group of Idaho Republicans hopes to introduce a bill this week that would transform Idaho’s health care system by reducing costs, increasing access to care and creating a system that improves patients’ outcomes and overall health.

“Idaho fought to ensure we maintain local control of our health care system,” said Representative John Vander Woude, House Caucus Chairman, who is sponsoring the legislation. “With the election of President Donald Trump, now is time to change Idaho’s health care system without interference from the federal government. Today, health care is expensive and inefficient. We have a solution to fix it.”

The Accountable Community Care Policy is designed to reduce health care costs for all Idahoans, regardless of their health, income or geographical location, by creating better outcomes for patients and establishing accountability in the health care system. The plan is built around three key components – addressing Idaho’s doctor shortage, ensuring health insurers, pharmaceutical companies and hospitals are held accountable and ensuring there is quality, coordinated health care services available to Idaho’s Medicaid population and those who fall in the gap.

“The Accountable Community Care Policy will reduce health care costs for everyone in this state. No matter if you are poor or rich, live in a rural community or city center, are self-employed or work for a large corporation, this legislation will make your health care more affordable.” said Representative Vander Woude.

The bill will increase the number of family medicine residency slots in Idaho. This will help increase the number of primary doctors we have in the future. However, to help fill the immediate need the state is experiencing, the Accountable Community Care Policy will create a loan forgiveness program to help community health centers recruit doctors. This will help incentivize doctors to serve in rural parts of the state and also build the infrastructure for residency programs down the road.

Hospitals cannot turn patients away in a time of emergency; however, many Idahoans end up in the ER when really they would be better served by meeting with a primary care physician. Eventually, these health care costs are passed on to all Idahoans. To keep costs down and hold hospitals accountable, the bill will direct hospitals to help enroll patients in a primary care home when appropriate instead of directing them to a costly emergency room visit. More accountability will also be added for health insurers and pharmaceutical companies. Patients also need to be held accountable for their care. The Accountable

Community Care Policy will give patients the coaching and resources they need to help them take an active role in their health.

The Accountable Community Care Policy will create the Idaho Coordinated Care Program. This program will serve those who are currently receiving Medicaid or part of the gap population, those who make too much money to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to be eligible to purchase health insurance coverage on the exchange. The bill will provide limited funding so those who are in the gap can receive important care from their community health centers, such as annual health screenings and diabetes management among other care. The Idaho Coordinated Care Program will move Medicaid enrollees into locally controlled coordinated care contracts. This will reduce costs, increase patient accountability and improve outcomes.

The Accountable Community Care Policy puts the infrastructure and tools in place so local experts can determine the best way to solve the problems facing their communities. This plan reduces health care costs for all Idahoans, improves patient outcomes and expands access to those in need. Most importantly, it keeps Idahoans in control of important health care decisions and prevents federal interference.