

NM Health Security Plan Talking Points

30-Second Description

The Trump administration continues to chip away at the Affordable Care Act and has already weakened some key provisions, such as requiring everyone to have coverage. Now it is trying to remove key consumer protections that keep insurance companies from discriminating against people who have pre-existing conditions. If that happens, millions will be denied coverage, and premiums will increase even further.

It really is time for New Mexico to finally set up its own health plan that ensures comprehensive coverage for all New Mexicans, regardless of age, health, and employment status. Our state has a small population, so this approach makes a lot of sense.

The Health Security Plan would offer comprehensive benefits and freedom of choice of health care provider and facility, even across state lines. It would be our plan, run like a coop, with a citizens' commission.

Important Concepts to Get Across

I. Health Security Plan:

1. The Health Security Plan is a **homegrown** solution—the result of years of input from New Mexicans from all walks of life and all parts of the state.
2. The Health Security Plan is **not “government-run.”** There are no cabinet secretaries or elected officials who can serve on the commission. The commission consists of a **geographically** representative citizens' board (like a **cooperative**).
3. The **benefit package (the covered services)** can be no less than the services currently offered to state employees. (Regardless of which plan a state employee signs up for, the services are the same.)
4. Plan members have **freedom of choice of health care provider and hospital**, including across state lines.
5. The Plan will **not be funded through tax increases**. It will be funded partly through sliding-scale premiums and employer contributions (for those covered by the Plan), with caps for both revenue sources. These will be placed in a dedicated trust fund, along with existing public monies that pay for health care (Medicaid, Medicare, etc.). If federal premium subsidies and tax credits continue, these will be included.
6. Once the bill is passed, the Legislative Finance Committee must **complete a fiscal analysis** to determine whether the Plan is financially feasible. The Plan will not be implemented until the legislature, with the fiscal analysis in hand, votes to move forward.
7. **Additional benefits.** Workers compensation and automobile insurance premiums are reduced for Plan members, since injuries and illness will be covered under the Health Security Plan.

For more information, call the Health Security for New Mexicans Campaign at 505-897-1803 or visit our website at www.nmhealthsecurity.org

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II. Health Security and the Current Health Care Landscape:

1. While hundreds of thousands of New Mexicans now receive health coverage because of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), there are still problems to address, and the future of the ACA is in question.
2. Current problems include increases in premiums, deductibles, and copays; rising drug costs; and greater restrictions in choice of health care provider. These problems are due largely to our complex private insurance system.
3. Two independent studies (from 1994 and 2007) determined that Health Security's approach would save our state billions of dollars in health care expenditures. These studies were conducted prior to passage of the ACA, so they did not take into consideration federal subsidies, tax credits, or Medicaid expansion funds (all of which could be reduced without repealing the ACA). It is important to note that the Plan was deemed financially feasible even without the ACA's extra revenue benefits.
4. The current private insurance system, with its hundreds of policies—all with different copays, deductibles, and coverage restrictions—imposes tremendous administrative costs on businesses, health care providers, and patients. New Mexico can't afford to spend money on administration as opposed to care.
5. As efforts to dismantle the ACA continue in Washington, New Mexico needs to be ready to protect the health care security of its residents.