

States Across Country Refuse To Run Insurance Pools For Americans With Preexisting Conditions

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WASHINGTON

The following information was released by Wyoming Senator John Barrasso:

USA Today reported recently that 200,000 Americans whose illnesses have kept them from getting regular health insurance will not be allowed to enroll this summer in a new lower cost federal program for people like them because they already buy pricey state plans.

And the Washington Post recently reported, eighteen states have said they will not administer a stopgap program to provide insurance coverage to people whose preexisting conditions have left them uninsured, forcing the federal government to do the work.

States have not been given guidance from Washington on how to run these pools and who will pay the bill if federal funding runs dry. The Wall Street Journal recently reported that a Health and Human Services (HHS) spokeswoman declined to say whether the U.S. would cover losses if the program ran out of money. Instead she said:

I think we need to get the programs up and running before we start speculating.

Today, U.S. Senator John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) spoke about this issue on the Senate floor. Excerpts include:

So we have 200,000 Americans with preexisting conditions who have been playing by the rules, who have been doing what is right, and what happens? They are not going to have any access to the benefit that the President and the Democrats in this Congress promised would be available to them.

So this week all 50 states were given the opportunity to tell the administration whether they wanted to run their brand-new, high-risk pool for individuals with preexisting conditions.

Eighteen states said to Washington, no, thank you. Eighteen states have refused to participate. Why? Well, mainly because they don't know if and when the federal money runs out how it's going to be paid for.

Well, Americans and governors across our country have serious questions about this new high-risk insurance program, how much will it cost the states, how much will it cost the taxpayers, and why won't all American patients with preexisting conditions have access to the immediate benefits that they were promised?

Unfortunately, Washington's lack of answers clearly demonstrates that this administration doesn't have its act together. The administration has not delivered on the President's promise to help all Americans who have preexisting conditions have access to the same affordable health insurance coverage.

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