

Below is an op-ed that was submitted to the Indianapolis Star on December 5, 2013, concerning recent reporting about the Healthy Indiana Plan.

Healthy Indiana Plan Works for Hoosiers

This summer, I was pleased to work with Governor Pence on an agreement with the Obama administration that allows us to continue to offer the innovative, consumer-driven Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) through 2014. In fact, because of this agreement, 20,000 more low-income Hoosiers will have health coverage in 2014. Unfortunately, this element of the story has been misconstrued or ignored in recent coverage by the Indianapolis Star.

The extension agreement was the result of a strategic and thoughtful effort by the Pence administration to make sure more Hoosiers had a coverage option on January 1, 2014. We continue to engage the federal government in hopes of expanding coverage to even more Hoosiers through HIP.

The Pence administration wants to reduce the number of uninsured in Indiana. The federal government shares this goal, and during negotiations about the extension of the Healthy Indiana Plan, they suggested that, starting in 2014, HIP focus exclusively on those Hoosiers who are under the federal poverty level. These individuals are not eligible for premium tax credits under the Affordable Care Act. The federal government's position was that those over the federal poverty line could be covered under new subsidized federal policies through Obamacare.

As has been widely reported, the federal exchange has been fraught with operational issues. Consequently, we anticipated that many of the transitioning HIP members would find it difficult to obtain coverage from the federal government. The first week of November we asked the federal government for a temporary extension of the Healthy Indiana Plan for those members who are still trying to secure coverage on the federal marketplace. We will continue to reach out to the HIP members to assist them in making the transition.

As we work with these HIP members, something interesting has happened. Many of them have told us they want to stay on HIP. The media have panned the state for kicking these Hoosiers off the Healthy Indiana Plan in favor of ObamaCare. These sentiments bolster the state's long-held position on the value of HIP. We appreciate that so many people agree with us that HIP is a better choice. It IS a good alternative to Obamacare.

To repeat, the waiver granted Indiana by the federal government to operate HIP through 2014 means *more* low-income Hoosiers will have health coverage through the Healthy Indiana Plan—a uniquely Hoosier approach to providing health coverage to low-income

Hoosiers that also contains incentives for healthy decision-making and personal responsibility. We continue to work with the federal government to find ways to build upon the successes of the Healthy Indiana Plan to bring coverage to more Hoosiers in a fiscally responsible way.

Debra Minott, Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration