



Legislative Link

A legislative update provided by the United Way of Florida

Medicaid Expansion Alternatives in House and Senate

Perhaps the single biggest question of this legislative session is: “How will Florida respond to the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)?” The U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding PPACA gives states the option of whether to expand Medicaid to people earning up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. Up to 900,000 uninsured Floridians would be covered under the expanded Medicaid option, which would be 100 percent funded by the federal government for the first three years, scaling back to 90 percent in 2020. Expanding the state’s Medicaid Program was given a thumbs-up by Governor Scott.

The House and Senate, however, declared Medicaid expansion to be unacceptable and have considered three alternative approaches: [SB 1816](#) by Sen. Joe Negron, R-Palm City, would use federal funds to offer private coverage to a large portion of the currently uninsured through an expansion of the Healthy Kids program; [SB 1844](#) by Sen. Aaron Bean, R- Jacksonville, rejects the federal funds and uses only state funding to cover a much smaller group of uninsured through the ‘Florida Health Choices Plus’ program; and [HB 7169](#) by Rep. Richard Corcoran, R-Land O’Lakes, and the House Select Committee on PPACA also rejects the federal money and uses state funds to provide \$2,000 subsidies to an even smaller number of low-income Floridians to purchase health care services through the Health Choices Plus program. [Read more.](#)

This week, Senator Negron, who has been at the forefront of the Legislative debate, suggested a fourth, hybrid approach might be possible, which blends his plan to expand the ‘Healthy Kids’ program to cover adults with Rep. Corcoran’s ‘Florida Health Choices Plus’ proposal. The hybrid plan would use some federal funds and would allow individuals to choose between the two programs. “There are some good uses of federal funds and there are some uses that are not so good,” Negron said. “And I believe using some federal funds for Representative Corcoran’s plan to give people that option would be a principled negotiated resolution of the different plans.” [Read more.](#)

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