United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 8, 2013

Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C., 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As you know, I have always been a strong supporter of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and I am committed to ensuring it works for Wisconsin. The ACA has already had an empowering impact on the lives of many Wisconsinites. Today, insurance companies can no longer discriminate against children based on pre-existing medical conditions. Young adults can stay on their parents' insurance plans up to age 26. Women are receiving free preventive care. And seniors on Medicare are benefiting from relief in their prescription drug costs. Wisconsin residents now have the opportunity to apply for new health insurance options through the federal Health Insurance Marketplace. We need all doors to the Marketplace to be wide open. Unfortunately, the website for the Marketplace, healthcare.gov, has been plagued with technical problems. These issues are totally unacceptable and must be fixed immediately to ensure Wisconsin residents can access the full benefits of the ACA.

The need for a well-functioning ACA enrollment program is particularly acute in my home state. In Wisconsin, Governor Walker refused to accept a federal investment to strengthen our BadgerCare program with the ACA. Now because of this choice, Wisconsin is one of only two states in the nation that have submitted a plan to kick large numbers of their residents off of Medicaid in 2014 and according to Kaiser Health News, Wisconsin leads the nation in removing the most people from Medicaid.

On January 1, 2014, as a result of the choice the Governor and our State Legislature have made, it is estimated that 77,000 Wisconsin citizens will be kicked off their current Medicaid coverage. These individuals will become uninsured unless they enroll in the federal Marketplace by December 15, 2013. I remain hopeful that the Governor will keep his promise to ensure that these 77,000 people do not experience a lapse in coverage. However, this is a shared responsibility and all Wisconsinites also need and deserve a well-functioning website through which they may enroll in new health insurance coverage.

Given this urgent need in Wisconsin, I implore you to redouble your efforts to fix the enrollment problems in sufficient time to allow all Wisconsin families the ability to purchase coverage in the Health Insurance Marketplace. I am committed to making sure that America's new health care law works for Wisconsin and I look forward to working with you and our state officials to move the ACA forward for Wisconsin families and businesses.

Sincerely,

Tammy Baldwin

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator