



Utahns show support for Gov.'s Healthy Utah Plan, recent poll shows

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SALT LAKE CITY — Utah lawmakers decided not to decide what to do about Medicaid expansion.

Many Republicans also turned a cold shoulder to the Gov. Gary Herbert's plan to help those residents in need.

A new poll shows most Utahns supports Herbert's idea, but will lawmakers listen?

“Without this funding, these people are going to need care and without it, these people are literally suffering and dying without this care,” said Sen. Brian Shiozawa.

The Republican said about 58,000 Utahns are losing out on critical care. That's how many people fall into the coverage gap.

Medicaid expansion would fix that, but Herbert has another idea and Utahns seem to like it.

Dan Jones & Associates asked more than 600 likely voters what they think.

Eighty-eight percent say they favor the Healthy Utah Plan over doing nothing. Seventy percent prefer the Governor's idea over Medicaid expansion and 59% say overall, they strongly support it.

“Yes we're a conservative state that believes in individual responsibility but we also want a safety net, we want to cover people that are falling through the cracks,” said Sven Wilson a health economist with Notalys, which helped with analysis of the poll.

However the Governor faces a big challenge ahead, and that's negotiating with the federal government and convincing the Obama Administration to approve a multi-million dollar block grant for his Healthy Utah Plan.

Herbert's second hurdle? Convincing his colleagues, the State's lawmakers.

“I think the legislature will look at what we’ve got and they may have some improvements, modifications and that’s okay. I just want to solve the problem,” the Governor said in an interview with FOX13.

The State will most likely solve the problem during a special session.

“If the voice of the people means something and it should and most of the utahns favor an expansion of this coverage to help those uninsured then this is the way we ought to go,” says Senator Shiozawa.

A special session could be called sometime in the late summer or early fall.