

# Pence in Milwaukee: Those with pre-existing conditions will have access to care under

June 10, 2017



MILWAUKEE — Vice President Mike Pence on Saturday promised that people with pre-existing conditions will have access to care they need, no exceptions” under the GOP plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

Pence declared President Trump “believes in states-based solutions” for Medicare and Medicaid and will make decisions.

“Under this administration, Gov. Walker will be able to bring Wisconsin solutions to meet the unique needs of Wisconsin,” Pence told those assembled at Direct Supply, a Milwaukee company that provides equipment for senior living facilities.

living communities.

In introducing Pence, Walker said he was proud that Wisconsin had not created an exchange under the ACA and had also declined to take a federal Medicaid expansion offered through the Affordable Care Act.

Walker called Obamacare "broken" and said that if not repealed, 28 million Americans will not have health insurance. From a Congressional Budget Office report that also found 52 million would be uninsured that year.

Dems focused on the additional 24 million that would not have insurance under the GOP plan as the

"Kicking vulnerable people off of their health care insurance isn't the Wisconsin way," said state Dem Rep. Scott Komer. "These numbers, these are real people and we need to prioritize taking care of our most vulnerable Wisconsin

Several Republican state lawmakers were in the audience, including Rep. Jim Ott, R-Mequon; Sen. Scott Komer, R-Franklin; and U.S. Reps. Glenn Grothman, of Glenbeulah, and U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, of

The crowd applauded loudly when Pence praised Walker as "one of the best governors in the history of this country." Pence successfully prompted a standing ovation when he praised House Speaker Paul Ryan, for their pledge to repeal Obamacare.

Pence, who also touted Trump's support of the Keystone and Dakota pipelines, said the decision to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement was the president's "biggest achievement." He said the president "has signed more laws into effect and rolled back more red tape than any president in history."

"Donald Trump has a three-part agenda: jobs, jobs, jobs," Pence said.

Pence told the crowd Julie Champine spoke of her health care woes during a private roundtable discussion with Walker, business owners and others. Pence said Champine, who works from home, "literally cannot afford to pay her health care premiums have risen higher than her mortgage."

"Help is on the way," Pence told Champine, who sat in the audience.

Pence said that "we might need one more thing" to reform health care. He asked attendees to "boast about our health care system."

"Pray for our country," he urged.

Pence made no mention during his 22-minute speech of the controversy surrounding alleged Russian collusion during a recent hearing involving fired FBI director James Comey.

But audience member Andrew Cook said afterward that he thought Pence alluded to it when he said "we will never stop fighting." "At any given moment, I promise you, President Donald Trump will never stop fighting."

Cook, of Glendale, is a Direct Supply employee and said he's open to health care reform but feels concerned about the impact on his job.

"There's good and bad things about it," he said. "Competition is well and good but they should also

Shawn Zerr of Milwaukee said said one of his biggest concerns is that health insurance companies

"I have a friend who used the exchange whose premiums have gone up 90 percent last year," he said. "It's not working."

Zerr said he hopes the protection of pre-existing conditions will be retained, however.

Grothman told reporters before the event that constituents aren't talking about the question of Russia last Thursday's hearings involving fired FBI director James Comey.

"I've been so many meetings this week and nobody talked about Comey until all of a sudden, I met

Grothman said he'd be shocked if the president's proposed cut to Great Lakes funding is not restored. "I'd like to see much of the president's proposed budget cuts to be rejected by Congress."

Asked if he predicted tax reform occurring before the end of the year, Grothman responded, "It would be a

— *By Kay Nolan*

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For questions or assistance, please contact: Colin Schmies at [schmies@wispolitics.com](mailto:schmies@wispolitics.com) or 608-206-0476