

Affordable Care Act Upheld, Washington Sits at Front of The Line

Local News

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler expressed great relief with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision upholding the Affordable Care Act and said Washington state is now well ahead of most states in reforming its health care system. Many reforms are currently in place, but key benefits and programs take effect in 2014, including Washington's new Health Exchange, federal subsidies to help 477,000 people afford health insurance, an expansion of Medicaid for 328,000 poor childless adults and the ban on insurance companies from denying people coverage if they're sick. "I'm very pleased the Supreme Court chose to uphold the Affordable Care Act, we've been busy for two years now implementing the reforms and have made great progress, but there's a lot left to do before 2014. With the court decision out of the way, we can continue our focus on where it should be — bringing relief to families struggling to find quality, affordable health insurance." - Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler

The millions of Washington state consumers benefitting from the Affordable Care Act's early reforms include:

- More than 2.4 million people who no longer face lifetime caps on their health benefits.
- More than 52,000 young adults up to age 26 who have stayed on their parents' health plans.
- More than 1.2 million people who now have coverage for preventive care with no co-pays or deductibles.
- More than 60,000 people in Medicare who have saved hundreds on their prescription drugs.

Washington state also leveraged millions in federal funds available under the Affordable Care Act to create:

- [Public access to health insurance rate requests](#).
- [A new marketplace in Washington state for health insurance in 2014](#) — called an exchange — where people can shop for health plans, compare their options and apply for subsidies.
- [A temporary health insurance program](#) (PCIP-WA) for people with pre-existing health conditions.

"The Affordable Care Act is not perfect, but it moves us in the right direction and is the only meaningful reform that's passed in decades," said Kreidler. "The debate was clearly contentious, and I'm grateful to have it behind us. But, now it's time to focus on the work ahead — more than a million uninsured people in our state are counting on us."