**Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc.**

# NEWS

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# New Statewide Radio Ad: $635 Million

## *Wisconsin Health Care Costs $635 Million Higher Because State Not Capturing Its "Fair Share "*

### *Wis. Ranks Near the Bottom in Bringing Home Federal Medicaid Dollars*

**MADISON (October 13, 2008) ----** The Wisconsin Hospitals Issue Advocacy Council (WHIAC) on Monday released its second radio ad in a month as a part of an ongoing "Fair Share for Health Care" campaign. The effort is targeted at educating the public and state lawmakers about the lack of Medicaid funding the state of Wisconsin captures from the federal government and the impact it is having on health care costs.

According to the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA), hospital prices in Wisconsin were $635 million higher in 2007 because the state Medicaid program reimburses less than half of what it costs to deliver care to Medicaid patients. The $635 million is the amount of the shortfall that is passed on to everyone else.

"We are sending hundreds of millions of our tax dollars to Washington every year, but not doing enough to bring our fair share back home," said WHA Executive Vice President Eric Borgerding. "Because we're not doing enough to capture those dollars, millions are going to other states, like Illinois, to help control their health care costs. "

Medicaid is the safety net health care program for low-income, uninsured patients. It is a state/federal partnership in which the federal government provides $1.46 for every $1 contributed by the state. Wisconsin ranks *among the worst in the country* in terms of drawing down federal dollars for hospital Medicaid payments and subsequently ranks among the worst in the country in overall dollars received from Washington.

Wisconsin ranked 44$^{th}$ in the per capita state and federal Medicaid dollars used for hospital payments, well behind most of its Midwestern neighbors. As a percentage of its total state budget, Wisconsin is the 11$^{th}$ worst when it comes to investing in the Medicaid program. The result -- $635 million in unpaid Medicaid costs were shifted to small employers and families in 2007.

The new WHIAC ad, titled "$635 Million," will run for two weeks statewide and urges listeners to contact their state legislators and capture Wisconsin's "Fair Share" of federal Medicaid dollars. The ad script appears below.

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The Wisconsin Hospital Association is a membership organization that advocates for the ability of its members to provide high quality health care services to Wisconsin communities. The Wisconsin Hospitals Issue Advocacy Council, Inc. includes a coalition of Wisconsin health care providers committed to promoting, developing, and distributing information about Wisconsin's health care climate and the importance of enabling high quality health care to the general public of Wisconsin. For more information, please visit www.wha.org.

**Ad Script: We Can Do Better**

Announcer: *$635 million.*

That's the amount of unpaid hospital costs from one government healthcare program last year.

***$635 million.***

That's how much **more** we pay for healthcare because government isn't paying its fair share.

Millions of ***our*** federal tax dollars are going to other states…dollars that could be used to lower ***our*** healthcare costs in Wisconsin.

*State* legislators can change this. Call them at 800-362-9472 and tell them to bring our share of healthcare dollars home.

Paid for by the Wisconsin Hospital Issue Advocacy Council

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