



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Matt Mayer, 614-224-4422

BUCKEYE INSTITUTE RELEASES MEDICAID REPORT DETAILING REFORM OPTIONS

COLUMBUS – The Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions today released its sixth report of 2010, “**Crushing Weight: National Health Care Law Threatens to Make Medicaid an Unsustainable Burden for Ohioans.**” The report, written by Brian Blase, a health care expert at The Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C., contains four policy options for Ohio’s legislature and Governor-Elect John Kasich.

With Medicaid now eating up one quarter of Ohio state spending – a more than doubling over the past two decades – reforms must be enacted to change its unsustainable spending trajectory. Due to the crowding out effect Medicaid has on private insurance and the high cost of the long-term care entitlement, more Ohioans use Medicaid than ever before. With Ohio’s reimbursement rates already below the national average, many users do not receive timely and quality care. The passage of the Stimulus Act and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“ObamaCare”) only make things worse, as the maintenance of effort mandate drives even more Ohioans onto the Medicaid rolls. Ohio also must raise its primary rate physician reimbursement rates to Medicare levels in 2013 and 2014, but will lose the federal funding tied to those increases in 2015.

Blase notes: “The central policy goal for Medicaid reform is to restrict the program to the truly deserving of public assistance and to deliver care to them that is cost-effective...Allowing states to have the freedom to experiment is consistent with notions of federalism but it also enables states to be laboratories where they can adopt a variety of policies and learn from each other about what works and what does not work.”

Matt A. Mayer, President of the Buckeye Institute, stated, “Medicaid is bankrupting Ohio. Medicaid federal mandates must come to an end so that Ohio can provide its vulnerable populations with the health care services they need more efficiently and effectively. It is time for Ohio to take charge, keep the money sent to Washington, and run a program Ohioans think is equitable and affordable.”

The Medicaid report can be viewed at The Wire at www.buckeyeinstitute.org. The Buckeye Institute’s other reports can be viewed at www.buckeyeinstitute.org/reports.

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