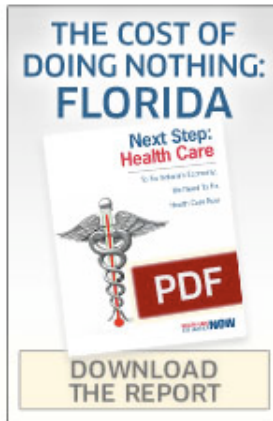


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Cost of Doing Nothing: Florida

By SEIU Change That Works



We cannot get our economy back on track without repairing the American health care system. Health care reform is not just a moral imperative, but also an economic necessity. In 2007, the U.S. economy lost as much as \$207 billion as a result of the poor health and shorter lifespan of the uninsured.

Skyrocketing health care costs add to families' already overwhelming burden, threatening their health and financial security. We can do better. Solving America's health care crisis will improve quality of care, reduce costs and make businesses more competitive.

The urgent need for reform is more apparent now in Florida than ever. In the past eight years, health care premiums for family coverage have risen more than three times faster than wages. With 8.1% unemployed, many families are at risk of losing their health coverage. The message is clear: Florida's families urgently need Congress to take direct action on health care reform.

Supporting Facts

- Health Insurance premiums in Florida increased by 72.0% from 2000 to 2007, while median earnings only increased a mere 20.2%. The median yearly wage in 2007 for Florida was only \$27,353, but the average health care premium for a family was \$11,720. This means that premiums grew 3.6 times faster than wages.
- In Florida, approximately 3,873,000 non-elderly people spent more than 10% of their pre-tax family income on health care costs in 2008. 79.7% of those people have insurance, but are underinsured. 3,087,000 Florida residents with insurance spent more than 10% of their pre-tax income on health care costs, and 883,000 spend more than 25% of their income.
- By 2016, projections show that Florida families will have to pay close to \$22,400 for health care or over 43 percent of median household income. This would represent a 76 percent increase over 2008 levels.
- In addition, more and more Florida residents have been forced into the exorbitantly expensive individual market, as unemployment reaches massive heights. As of December 2008, 751,753 Florida residents were unemployed. That reflects a loss of over 336,000 jobs statewide last year alone, increasing the state unemployment rate by over 1 percentage point.
- If the state keeps losing jobs at the rate it did last year, 1,360,143 people in Florida will be unemployed by 2010. 46.38% of insured Florida residents depend on their employers for their health insurance. If nothing is done to stem the economic downturn and reform our health care system, 282,168 Florida workers will lose their current health coverage, meaning that 121,678 more people will likely enroll in COBRA. That leaves 160,490 people who will have to enroll in Medicaid, fend for themselves on the private market, or become uninsured.
- This year Florida faces a \$5.7 billion budget shortfall, and as a result, the state government has implemented a hiring freeze on state employees. As of 2007, 20% of all state spending has gone to Medicaid and SCHIP. \$14.6 billion went to spending on Medicaid alone.
- As of 2007 there were already 843,006 uninsured children in Florida, and more than 2,840,918 uninsured adults. 1,190,935 of uninsured adults in Florida also live below the Federal Poverty Line. Florida's economy lost as much as \$14.55 billion because of the poor health and shorter lifespan of the uninsured in 2007. That equates \$4,000 per uninsured Florida resident.
- Of the top 10 employers in the state of Florida, 4 of them are Healthcare Providers. According to the US Census, 814,904 individuals work in the Health Care Sector in the state & make an average of \$3,876 per month, which accounts for about \$3.2 billion in wages per month.

The health of the American economy cannot improve without addressing the healthcare crisis. Building on the existing healthcare system, quality, affordable healthcare can be guaranteed to every American. It's the reform truly needed to rebuild Florida's economy.