

JON ERPENBACH

S T A T E S E N A T O R

December 12, 2016

Group Insurance Board
Department of Employee Trust Funds
P O Box 7931
Madison, WI 53707-7931

Dear Group Insurance Board,

You meet tomorrow deciding the fate of the health insurance offerings for over 100,000 people from this state. Local police, retired teachers, janitors, firefighters, engineers, social workers, pavement inspectors, retired and current public employees and even politicians all wait for your decision. No one accountable to the electors of the State of Wisconsin even sits on your Board, and Governor Walker has been silent as you trudge ahead with an agenda of great financial risk to taxpayers and the private health care economy in this state.

The urgency you once felt in avoiding the Affordable Care Act tax will surely be eliminated with the new Federal administration, it simply no longer exists. The line of opponents to the self-funded option for the state group insurance plan continues to grow as do the arguments against the change. The risks of a government run choice over a private market driven decision are measurable; estimated at over \$100 million risk for taxpayers and that is without the unknown pitfalls of putting this state in the health insurance business where we have to pay for expertise.

I plea to your practical side. We have a private market system that works and many of us, including the Governor, sing the praises of our health insurance options for citizens. Maintaining the existing group plan helps drive the market for low cost health insurance in every corner of this state for every person in this state, not just current and former public employees. Even if you choose to just pay someone to run the group plan for you in this model, that choice adds bureaucracy, potential arbitrary provider decisions, disruption of care, and added costs for all of the taxpayers of the state of Wisconsin.

You hold the power in this decision. And while you are accountable to no electorate you are writing law that will affect over 100,000 people in Wisconsin directly, the private health insurance economy, and the taxpayers of this state. After reading reports from the last meeting perhaps you do not feel the weight of the decision; but know your actions hold great power and accountability. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and to understand that you serve the people of this state.

Sincerely,



JON ERPENBACH

State Senator
27th District