



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 24, 2013

Interview: Bobby Peterson (608) 261-6939 ext. 201 (office) or (608) 444-7197 (cell)
Brynne McBride (608) 261-6939 ext. 210 (office) or (608) 279-2426 (cell)

Health Reform in Wisconsin: Bad Tricks and No Treats

Madison, WI – “Bad decisions, faulty logic, and political ambition have stranded many Wisconsin families seeking health coverage out in the cold,” says Bobby Peterson, public interest attorney and Executive Director of ABC for Health. “Governor Walker and his administration bear a large measure of responsibility for the fix many low income Wisconsin families are in today,” continues Peterson. Wisconsin decided not to build its own insurance exchange, refused the Medicaid expansion, defunded the Consumer Assistance Program in Wisconsin, then decided to cut parents from BadgerCare Plus while creating regulatory scarecrows for health reform’s helpers—the Navigators and certified application counselors. “The feds at CMS who set up our Marketplace are not off the hook either,” continues Peterson. “They funded navigator programs in a hodge-podge way in Wisconsin and set up a \$400 million Rube Goldberg Machine to enroll in the Marketplace. How is the first month of open enrollment going? It’s scary like Halloween out there but without the candy!”

“We’ve got hundreds of thousands of people in Wisconsin waiting in line for coverage! We have 90,000 or so parents and adults being kicked off BadgerCare Plus, people leaving HIRSP, and the 163,000 or so who were standing in line, waiting for the BadgerCare Plus Core Plan. We can do better to get these people the care and coverage they deserve. There were opportunities to do this better. Walker was warned there was a better way to get individuals and families in Wisconsin covered without creating a corn maze of eligibility,” says Peterson.

On Wednesday, October 23, HealthWatch Wisconsin produced an episode of its popular web show, the HealthWatch WatchDog to discuss Wisconsin’s mis-steps and bad decisions when implementing health reform. The web cast, titled “Bad Tricks & No Treats,” is available to the media and public at the following link:

<http://mediasite.safetyweb.org/Mediasite/Play/f84f936e6d9f4af5864ea0953fd0d41e1d>

Peterson concludes, “It’s quite sad to see our state and federal governments fractured by political disagreements that hurt the neediest people in our state.”

HealthWatch Wisconsin is a project of ABC for Health, Inc., a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit, public interest law firm dedicated to linking children and families, particularly those with special health care needs, to health care benefits and services. ABC for Health’s mission is to provide information, advocacy tools, legal services, and expert support needed to obtain, maintain, and finance health care coverage and services.

