

EXPLANATION OF REFERENDUM

City of Kenosha
November 3, 2020

“Should Wisconsin expand healthcare coverage under BadgerCare by accepting additional federal Medicare funds and providing healthcare coverage to an estimated 82,000 more Wisconsinites?”

BadgerCare Plus is a health insurance program available to various segments of the population of Wisconsin, including low-income adults. Wisconsin Medicaid is the joint federal and state program that pays for the medical services for the low-income residents of Wisconsin. Currently, to be eligible for BadgerCare Plus, a person must meet certain non-financial and financial requirements, which generally includes for adults having income of no more than 100% the federal poverty level.

To ensure lower income Americans have access to health insurance, the federal Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid eligibility to adults with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level. Expansion of Medicaid eligibility is at the option of the individual states. While thirty eight (38) states, including the neighboring states of Michigan, Indiana, Iowa, and Minnesota, have adopted the expanded Medicaid coverage, the state of Wisconsin has not.

It has been estimated by Wisconsin's Department of Health Services, expansion of Medicaid eligibility would have provided access to BadgerCare to an additional 82,000 people who need coverage.

The effect of a “yes” vote will advise the City of Kenosha Common Council to recommend that the state legislature and Governor take necessary actions to accept additional federal Medicare funds and expand healthcare coverage in Wisconsin through BadgerCare Plus.

The effect of a “no” vote will advise the City of Kenosha Common Council not to make any recommendation on the subjects to the state legislature and Governor.