



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on July 4, 2012

Florida Gov. Rick Scott Won't Expand Medicaid Under ObamaCare

Florida Governor Rick Scott (pictured) has said he will not expand the state's Medicaid program or support the establishment of ObamaCare insurance exchange programs in his state. Following last week's Supreme Court ruling on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Scott said in an interview with [NewsMax TV](#) that he will turn down the additional federal dollars for Medicaid expansion under the law.



"This Medicaid expansion — we're not going to implement that because what it's going to actually do is reduce jobs in our state," Scott said. "It's going to cost our taxpayers significant amounts of money. The Medicaid expansion in our state will cost 1.9 billion dollars." The first-term Republican governor said a typical government program "promises it's going to cover everything, then immediately runs out of money and starts rationing care by underpaying providers, hospitals, doctors, and so then you don't have access to care. That's exactly what ObamaCare will do," he said. "It's going to be devastating for our families that need care, it's going to be devastating for taxpayers, and it's going to kill jobs."

Scott said that the expanded program would be funded by the federal government in the beginning, "but over time they'll have us, the state taxpayers, pay more and more of it." And even with the federal dollars, he noted, "it's our federal taxes that pay for this."

While many in the state are saying Scott should take the money to make health care more widely affordable and accessible, the governor insists the program would soon drive up the cost of health care for Floridians, while also adding to the state's tax burden and its ability to fund other programs.

"All it's going to do is make more individuals dependent on a program that ultimately will not be able to provide the care that people will rely on. It's exactly what's happened with Medicaid. We're struggling right now to be able to afford our K-12 education system because Medicaid has been growing in our state at three-and-a-half times our general revenue," Scott said.

"So if you care about education in our state, you don't want me to do this. If you're a taxpayer, you know you don't want me to do this. And if you're a business that has to pay these taxes, you say, 'Look, I'm competing in the global marketplace and the higher my costs go, there's going to be less jobs for Floridians because my customers care about cost.'"

The Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision upheld the Affordable Care Act's mandate requiring uninsured persons to purchase health insurance; it also, in a 7-2 ruling, declared unconstitutional the provision requiring states to either join in the expanded Medicaid program or lose all their Medicaid funding. That level of coercion, the court ruled, violated the "dual sovereignty" of state and federal authority under the Constitution. But former Justice Department official John Yoo argued in a [Wall Street Journal op-ed](#) critical of the entire decision, that the Court's rejection is likely more a matter of money than principle.

"The limits on congressional coercion in the case of Medicaid may apply only because the amount of



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federal funds at risk in that program's expansion — more than 20% of most state budgets — was so great," Yoo wrote. "If Congress threatens to cut off 5%-10% to force states to obey future federal mandates, will the court strike that down too? Doubtful."

Scott, who ran a healthcare corporation before entering politics, told NewsMax TV that Congress would do better by providing incentives in the tax code than by mandating coverage.

"If you're worried about pre-existing conditions, give the individual the same tax breaks as an employer so when you change jobs, you don't lose your health insurance just like you don't lose your life insurance if you have your own policy," he said.

"And finally, reward people for doing the right thing. Don't smoke, exercise, eat right. If we do all these things, the cost of healthcare will go down. That's the issue we're dealing with. This is an insurance solution, not a cost of healthcare solution."

Scott frankly doubts the ability of the federal government to deliver on all that it promises with a national health care program:

We already have trillion-dollar federal deficits. Who's going to pay for this unbelievable expansion? As the Supreme Court said, this is a significant tax. This is one of the biggest tax increases in the history of our country. Everyone is going to have to pay for this.

It's a big tax increase, but more importantly, it's going to have a significant impact on your ability to get the healthcare that you deserve.

Photo of Gov. Rick Scott: AP Images



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