

JONATHAN JOHNSON GOVERNOR 2016



Jonathan Johnson's Statement to the Utah Legislature Regarding Medicaid Expansion

Over the last 20 years, the federally funded portion of Utah's annual budget has increased from \$1.5B to over \$3.5B – and more than half of that has happened in the last six years while Utah has enjoyed a relatively robust economy. This proposal signs up Utah for another \$600M or more a year of federal funding.

While we preach and practice self-reliance as a people and as families, as a state we are becoming more and more dependent on Washington., D.C. When will we stop looking to Washington for solutions and funding?

Even if you are okay becoming more reliant on Washington, members of Utah's Congressional delegation, as well as others in Congress such as House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, have warned that Congress will not honor its promise to pay its portion of Medicaid expansion.

And even if you take the Obama administration at its word that Washington will always be good for its share of the cost of Medicaid expansion, this proposal still puts a huge burden on Utah taxpayers for the remaining 10% of the costs – costs not capped in any way.

While the biggest component of Utahns' share is new "assessments" that has Utah's hospitals and other medical providers writing the check and sending it to the state treasury, they won't bear the burden of this new tax. No, it is Utah's taxpayers that will ultimately pay through higher health insurance premiums or healthcare bills. Thus, the medical provider assessment is an indirect and opaque tax Utahns – often the sickest among us – will pay.

I urge you:

- Don't burden Utahns with a hidden tax.
- Don't count on Washington to keep it promises.
- Don't create more dependence on the federal government.
- Don't pass Utah Access+.