



NEWS RELEASE

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RECENT MEDIA REPORTS SHOW NEED FOR HEALTH CARE AS HOOSIERS CONTINUE TO FACE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

EVANSVILLE, Ind. – With 125,000 Hoosiers now infected with the coronavirus and the state’s economy continuing to shed jobs, protecting the Affordable Care Act is more important than ever, says Democratic Attorney General nominee Jonathan Weinzapfel.

“As media reports have highlighted in recent days, businesses are closing, and Hoosiers are losing their jobs and employer-sponsored health care everyday due to this pandemic. Meanwhile, more and more people are getting sick and we are seeing an uptick in drug abuse and mental health issues,” added Weinzapfel. “Now is not the time to strip away health care.”

The *Indianapolis Business Journal* recently reported that as many as one million Hoosiers have lost their jobs, and their employer-sponsored health insurance along with it. A *South Bend Tribune* story reported on how drug overdoses are increasing as a result of the pandemic.

“People are struggling and for many, they have no other alternative than the ACA to get much needed coverage for themselves and their families,” said Weinzapfel. “The idea that my opponent wants to deny this lifeline to Hoosiers by supporting a partisan lawsuit to declare the ACA unconstitutional in the middle of a pandemic is dangerous and irresponsible.”

Recent media reports indicate that even more Hoosiers stand to lose their jobs and health care coverage in the coming days and weeks. Caesars Southern Indiana just furloughed 1,161 employees due to COVID-19, according to the *News and Tribune*, while the *Associated Press* reports that about two-thirds of Indiana’s total hotels, an estimated 700, may close for good due to the pandemic. The *Indianapolis Star* recently reported that 41 percent of restaurants are at risk of closing.

“Unfortunately, we are just beginning to see the havoc this pandemic will cause to our economy and families,” said Weinzapfel. “Many more will become unemployed and will no longer have health insurance. That’s why I am fighting so hard to pull Indiana from this lawsuit. Especially now, Hoosiers need an option to access care, without going broke.”

The lawsuit, filed by incumbent Attorney General Curtis Hill and supported by Republican Attorney General nominee Todd Rokita, would, if successful, eliminate the option for newly unemployed Hoosiers to access health care through the ACA exchanges. It would also strip away coverage for the estimated 168,000 Hoosier families who currently rely on the exchanges for permanent coverage and would jeopardize funding for the state’s HIP 2.0 program, which covers more than 500,000 Hoosiers.

Additionally, the lawsuit would gut protections that prevent insurance companies from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions or charging more for it. This would affect more than 2.7 million Hoosiers, not including those who have been exposed to COVID-19.

Rokita has a long record of opposing efforts to extend health care to working Hoosiers. As a member of Congress, he voted 54 times to cancel the ACA. He has also supported legislation that would allow insurers to charge Americans over the age of 55 more than five times more for insurance coverage and has voiced support for raising the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 78.

“Hoosiers’ access to health care is literally hanging in the balance,” said Weinzapfel. “Destroying it would not only devastate Hoosier families that are already struggling, it will send our economy into an even deeper nosedive. We can’t afford that, and we can’t afford Todd Rokita’s radical and irresponsible health care stance either. We must protect the ACA and give Hoosier families a fighting chance to get back on their feet once the pandemic is over.”

Jonathan Weinzapfel was elected mayor of Evansville in 2003 and re-elected in 2007. After his two terms as mayor, Weinzapfel served as chancellor of the Ivy Tech Evansville campus from 2014-2019. He also served in the Indiana General Assembly as a state representative from 1999-2003. He currently works as a partner at the law firm of Jones Wallace in Evansville. Jonathan and his wife Patricia reside in Evansville and have three children.

For more information on Jonathan or his campaign for Indiana Attorney General, please visit www.WeinzapfelForAG.com. To schedule an interview, email media@weinzapfelForAG.com.

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