

# OBAMA TRUMPETS GAINS IN HEALTHCARE COVERAGE

20 MILLION GAINED INSURANCE DUE TO HEALTHCARE LAW

**MILWAUKEE:** President Barack Obama trumpeted the nation's declining uninsured rate Thursday and said 20 million people have gained insurance as a result of his signature healthcare law as he commemorated the approaching sixth anniversary of the Affordable Care Act.

Obama criticized Republicans for trying to "repeal or undermine" the act about 60 times and said they've explained what they would replace it with "about zero times."

"If they got their way, 20 million people will have their insurance taken away from them," Obama said.

Congratulating local leaders in Wisconsin for winning a national health insurance enrollment contest, Obama acknowledged that millions more are eligible to enroll but have yet to do so. He attributed some of that to acrimony over the law, saying people haven't always known what's true and what's not.

Obama was introduced at the event by Brent Brown of Mosinee, Wisconsin, who said he's a Republican who never voted to elect Obama and worked to ensure he would not be president. But he said the health care law saved his life after he was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease and ran out of money for treatment. Brown called on Republicans to quit trying to repeal the law. "Swallow your pride as I am doing right now," he said.

More than 38,000 Milwaukee-area residents have newly signed up for health coverage, out of about 51,000 uninsured people who were eligible to enroll. The city's sign-up ratio was the highest among the 20 cities competing in the president's "Healthy Communities Challenge." The



**MILWAUKEE:** President Barack Obama speaks from the United Community Center on Thursday in Milwaukee, Wis. The President traveled to Milwaukee to celebrate the city's victory in the Healthy Communities Challenge, a competition between 20 cities to increase the number of Americans with health insurance during the latest Health Insurance Marketplace open enrollment period. —AP

winning city was promised a visit by the president.

### Renewing coverage

"All told, counting new folks and people renewing their coverage, you got nearly 90,000 people to sign up," Obama said. "That's enough to fill Lambeau Field and still have a big tailgating party with folks outside. And those tailgaters wouldn't have to worry because Obamacare covers indigestion from too many brats." Lambeau Field is the home of the NFL's Green Bay Packers. Obama also faulted Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker for refusing federal funding to expand Medicaid, an

option given to states under the law, to help cover more people. Obama said 21,000 additional state residents would be covered "with the stroke of his pen."

"He's denying Wisconsinites their ticket to health insurance and it's political," Obama said of Walker, who dropped out of the race for the Republican presidential nomination last year. Walker has argued that the federal government can't be trusted to keep its funding commitment to the states. Walker spokeswoman Laurel Patrick said Thursday that due to Walker's entitlement reforms, everyone in poverty is covered through Medicaid, without exposing taxpayers to potential liability. — AP

## MORE EVIDENCE THAT ASPIRIN LOWERS RISK OF CANCER: STUDY

**MIAMI:** People who take aspirin regularly have a significantly lower risk of cancer, particularly involving the colon and gastrointestinal tract, according to US research published on Thursday.

The findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Oncology suggest that aspirin use should complement-not replace-already established preventive screening measures such as colonoscopies. "We now can recommend that many individuals consider taking aspirin to reduce their risk of colorectal cancer-particularly those with other reasons for regular use, such as heart disease prevention," said senior author Andrew Chan of the Massachusetts General Hospital.

"Our findings imply that aspirin use would be expected to prevent a significant number of colorectal cancers above and beyond those that would be prevented by screening and may have even greater benefit in settings in which the resources to devote to cancer screening are lacking."

Previous research has shown that regular aspirin use can help prevent colorectal cancer.

However, the wider effect of aspirin on all cancers was less clear. So the researchers looked at 32 years worth of data from nearly 136,000 nurses and health professionals who answered health surveys.

People who took either a regular aspirin or a low-dose aspirin at least twice per week showed a three percent lower risk of any type of cancer than those who did not report regular aspirin use.

The protective benefit of aspirin "appeared after five years of continuous use at dosages ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 standard tablets a week or one low-dose tablet a day," said the study.

Aspirin use reduced the risk of colorectal cancer by 19 percent and the risk of any gastrointestinal cancer by 15 percent.

Regular aspirin use "could prevent close to 30,000 gastrointestinal tract tumors in the US each year," said the study. The team also calculated that aspirin use could "prevent an additional 7,500 colorectal tumors among US adults over 50 who have endoscopic screening and 9,800 among the almost 30 million who are not screened."

However, when researchers looked specifically at common cancers such as breast, lung and prostate cancer, they found no risk reduction from aspirin use.

The research was based on observational studies, so it is not as strong as a randomized controlled trial.

Aspirin also carries certain risks, such as bleeding and stroke, and cannot be tolerated by everyone. — AFP

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THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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