



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
GOVERNOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **GOVERNOR OPTS TO SEEK FEDERAL FUNDING FOR IMPLEMENTING STATE-BASED HEALTH EXCHANGE**

(BOISE) – Governor C. L. “Butch” Otter announced today that he will allow the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and Idaho Department of Insurance to apply for federal grant funding to implement a health insurance exchange aimed at making health coverage more affordable and accessible for Idahoans.

“It’s a difficult choice, but one I find far preferable to submitting to a federally established insurance exchange, with all the loss of control over our own destiny that entails,” Governor Otter said.

“This is a discussion we’ve been having in my administration since 2007 – well before Congress approved Obamacare,” he said. “My goal is to establish a State-based exchange emphasizing free-market principles and create a competitive marketplace for individuals and businesses to obtain the coverage they need rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all solution that may not be suitable or even workable for Idaho.”

The Level One implementation grant offered through the federal Affordable Care Act will be for \$30.9 million, primarily for information technology. The deadline for applications is September 30. Idaho can withdraw from the process at any time in the first phase of development without incurring any federal financial penalty.

The Governor’s goal is to keep the State’s options open so he and the Legislature can continue working together to carefully and cost-effectively establish a marketplace portal for individuals and employers to access information about health care coverage. The Internet portal would enable insurance plan shopping and comparisons, validate eligibility and demographics, and enable insurance plan enrollment and payment. The plan would leverage existing State technical systems through the Department of Health and Welfare.

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