

# Utah lawmakers remain divided on Medicaid expansion as the debate continues on Capitol Hill

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By Glen Mills

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SALT LAKE CITY, (ABC 4 Utah) – The debate over Medicaid expansion continues on Utah's Capitol Hill.

Thursday, The Health Reform Task Force met for a progress report on possible [solutions](#).

Stacy Davis-Stanford made sure to get a front row seat, because she's one of an estimated 57,000 uninsured Utahns who have no choice.



"Full stroke symptoms, paralysis, could not speak, they looked my in the eye and said you won't die without an MRI, so we're going to discharge you and did nothing, because I'm uninsured," said Davis-Stanford.

The so called doughnut hole she falls into was created when the Supreme Court made full Medicaid expansion optional under the [Affordable](#) Care Act.



The governor and legislature are divided on how to move forward.

The governor's [Healthy](#) Utah Plan was part of the agenda at the meeting.

"I think the legislature is balking for a number of reasons, mostly from what I hear they don't want to take federal money, but this is money Utahns are already paying for the Affordable Care

Act," said Director of the Department of Health, Dr. David Patton.

He pitched the plan to the task force, pointing out common ground values, like work requirements, cost [sharing](#) and providing coverage through the open market.

"The governor's plan has some good things in it and I think the underlying principals are good. I think the vehicle will have to be remodeled a little bit," said Task Force Co-chair, Rep. Jim Dunnigan.

The task force, made up of state senators and representatives is comparing the governor's plan to other options.

"There's a lot of good ideas, I'm actually kind of excited about some of the things we talked about today and I think we could put those together and come up with a [solution](#) for Utah," said Dunnigan.

For Davis-Stanford that can't happen soon enough.

"I have a progressive illness, I have an undiagnosed illness and so it's very unpredictable. I never know what my next day will be," said Davis-Stanford.

Dunnigan says a back up plan is in the works that could be put into place if the federal government doesn't live up to its end, but he did not offer details on how it would work.

The task force will take its findings to leaders in both chambers as all parties work to hash out an agreement.

