

Agreement Reached with Federal Authorities on Healthy Utah Plan

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Audio: http://cpa.ds.npr.org/kuer/audio/2014/10/WEB_HEALTHYUTAH_DB_102314.mp3

Link: <http://kuer.org/post/agreement-reached-federal-authorities-healthy-utah-plan>

By [Dan Bammes](#)

Utah Governor Gary Herbert says he's finally worked out a deal with the Obama administration on the details of his Healthy Utah plan, but he still has to get it through the Utah legislature.

Healthy Utah is Governor Herbert's proposed alternative to expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. At his [monthly news conference on KUED](#), the governor said he won't call a special session of the legislature to look at it. Instead, he'll submit it for consideration in the general session beginning in January.



While he expects some opposition from lawmakers, Herbert said no one should think this agreement means he's embracing Obamacare.

"The answer is no," Herbert told reporters. "I don't support the Affordable Care Act. I think it was flawed in its inception. I've been highly critical of the fact that Obama administration, not one time, even addressed the issue with the states. Didn't ask the governors, and yet we're the ones that have to implement most of it. I think the fact that it's so partisan, not one Republican vote, was a mistake."

The administration has agreed to allow Utah to charge higher co-pays under the Healthy Utah plan – fifty dollars for an emergency room visit – as well as a "work effort" requirement, meaning that those who have the ability will be asked to look for a job or get training.

Herbert says there will also have to be a 30-day public comment period on the agreement for both the federal government and for the state, and he expects those to run simultaneously.