

# Utah Democrats Say People Are Dying While Waiting for Medicaid Proposal

Link: <http://kuer.org/post/utah-democrats-say-people-are-dying-while-waiting-medicaid-proposal#stream/0>

Audio: [http://cpa.ds.npr.org/kuer/audio/2015/08/MedicaidDems WEB.mp3](http://cpa.ds.npr.org/kuer/audio/2015/08/MedicaidDems_WEB.mp3)

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By Andrea Smardon



Utah Democrats are blasting Republicans for not taking action to provide healthcare to low-income citizens. They held a press conference Tuesday saying a Medicaid expansion is long overdue.

Utah Democratic Party Chair Peter Corroon said the debate over Medicaid expansion is being controlled by six Republican leaders who have been meeting behind closed doors. He said the voice of

Democrats has been missing.

“But the most important voice that’s been missing is the voice of those who are affected,” Corroon said.

Then Brent Frisby got up to speak, whose wife passed away last month from colon cancer. Tears fell down his face as Frisby explained that he and his wife lived on 780 dollars a month, and they could not afford a colonoscopy four years ago when it might have made a difference.

“I’m here to carry on her legacy to help people so they don’t fall through the system,” Frisby said.

Democratic Representative and member of the state’s Health Care Task Force Rebecca Chavez-Houck followed Brent Frisby with tears in her eyes.

“It’s for people like Brent that we’re doing this,” Chavez-Houck said. She stood next to thousands of pages of reports to demonstrate all the task forces, studies and work that have gone into the state’s Medicaid decision over the last three years. “We don’t need to be taking

additional time while people get sick and die. We've had the answer under our noses the whole time. It's time to act now."

The communication's director of the Utah House of Representatives Chuck Gates responded with a statement saying the six Republicans leaders have been working diligently and that the coming proposal will cover those most in need, promote self-sufficiency, and protect the limited state budget.