

Herbert Plans to Unveil 'Healthy Utah' to Lawmakers on December 4

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December 4th is the day Gov. Gary Herbert plans to roll out his “Healthy Utah” alternative to Medicaid expansion.

Herbert tipped the date during his monthly KUED news conference. He says that should give lawmakers plenty of opportunity to understand the details in the plan. He will unveil the plan during the next meeting of the legislature’s Health Reform Task Force.

“This should bring us to a resolution,” said Herbert. “I plan to have a final resolution on this plan before the end of the session.”

Herbert is still negotiating with the Obama Administration over some points in his plan, but he says they should be resolved by the rollout date.

“We’re almost there, but some of this will be done simultaneously.”

Healthy Utah has come under attack recently [from a Florida-based group](#) that opposes any form of Medicaid expansion, be it alternative or not. Herbert says the group is using half-truths and falsehoods to poison the well.

“I don’t mind having a discussion and debate, I just want it to be truthful. It’s not right that a group comes in from outside the state and distorts the facts on this issue.”

Distorts facts?

“They say I want to expand Obamacare, which couldn’t be further from the truth. I think they don’t like the Affordable Care Act. I don’t like it either. I led the charge on repeal and replace with the Republican Governor’s Association.”



Herbert expressed confidence that Utah lawmakers will reject the rhetorical stink bombs being lobbed into the middle of the debate.

“I think legislators are smart enough to reject this. It’s coming from a group that can’t properly pronounce Tooele, Duchesne or Hurricane. I expect the legislature will have an open mind and we can talk about the truth.”

Herbert is optimistic he will be able to work with the new leadership in the House to make sure his plan gets a fair hearing. Outgoing speaker Becky Lockhart was steadfast in her opposition to any sort of program, but Herbert says Speaker-elect Greg Hughes seems intent on getting things done.

“There’s always the opportunity to have new eyes and a new perspective on this to find a solution. Doing nothing is not an option. I feel like I’ve been given lemons and I’m trying to make lemonade as best as I can that’s fair to the taxpayer.