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Coverage expansion is unhealthy

To the Editor:

Government can and should secure a safety net for those who cannot obtain healthcare coverage, but this week's expansion of the state-run FamilyCare program is bad policy. Government meddling in the health-insurance market, through excessive mandates and overregulation, has caused thousands of families with children to go without health insurance because it is too expensive. Having artificially inflated costs of coverage, the state now forces taxpayers to subsidize its own policy failures.

Worse, a recent audit of FamilyCare proved that fraud and dysfunction plague the program. On this issue, as with so many others, Trenton's approach seems to be: "where there's waste, increase funding; where there's mismanagement, increase authority; and where there's failure, subsidize expansion." That's no way to run a state. Taxpayers deserve greater accountability before programs like FamilyCare get more funding.

The first and best option for uninsured families is to fix our existing programs and give New Jerseyans more choices and lowered costs in a revitalized private healthcare market. In the end, compassion for the uninsured is located in loosening the state's iron-fisted grip on their healthcare choices, and delivering basic services to the most needy in a common-sense, cost-effective way.

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