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SENT: September 18, 2018

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HENDERSON RELEASES PLAN TO TACKLE RISING COSTS OF HEALTH CARE

LITTLE ROCK—Jared Henderson, Democratic candidate for governor, released his plan to combat the rising costs of health care in Arkansas, citing the need to address the opioid epidemic and Asa Hutchinson’s punitive Medicaid internet requirement.

“Arkansas’s leaders cannot continue to ignore the skyrocketing costs of health care,” Henderson said. “Too many people are one health tragedy away from not being able to provide for their families.”

Henderson’s plan focuses on protecting Medicaid, investing in services and centers that bring quality care to rural communities, senior citizens, and those affected by the opioid epidemic, and shining a light on the rising costs of healthcare services and insurance plans.

“We’ve got to move past the annual debate of altering Medicaid expansion and leaving the burden of uncompensated costs on our rural hospitals. Instead, there are smart and simple ways we can increase transparency in the market, begin to deliver affordable prices so working families don’t have to choose between going to the doctor or putting food on the table, and start to tackle our state’s opioid crisis,” Henderson added.

In conjunction with his plan release, Henderson will be making healthcare-related stops along the campaign trail this week including a visit to UAMS, touring a rural hospital in Northeast Arkansas, and hosting a health policy roundtable with nurse practitioners.

WE CAN:

- **End Medicaid internet requirements.** We’ve made great strides in reducing our uninsured population through Medicaid expansion, but the Hutchinson administration’s new internet requirements are a step in the wrong direction. Over 4,300 Arkansans have already been removed from the Medicaid rolls, and with so many residents without internet access, thousands more will lose health insurance through no fault of their own. Our focus needs to be ensuring that Medicaid funds are spent appropriately and effectively, not making it harder for citizens that need coverage to get it.
- **Restore funding for elderly care.** Asa Hutchinson has slashed funding to the Department of Aging and Adult Services by over 10% during his tenure. It’s crucial that we provide senior citizens with the medical, nutritional, and transportation services they need to remain in their homes and communities while avoiding costly and unnecessary institutional care.
- **Protect rural hospitals.** Hospitals are the leading employers and care providers in many of our rural communities. However, many of them rely on Medicaid

**JARED
HENDERSON**
— FOR GOVERNOR —

reimbursements to stay afloat, and Hutchinson's recent internet requirements are jeopardizing the health and jobs of thousands of Arkansans.

- **Combat opioid addiction.** Arkansas has the 2nd highest rate of opioid prescriptions in the nation. As governor, I will expand the capacity of treatment centers, promote evidence-based practices, and emphasize accessibility to medication-assisted treatment, like buprenorphine – a drug that has shown huge promise in treating addiction. We will also convene a multi-disciplinary task force of healthcare professionals, mental health experts, and law enforcement to ensure that we have thoughtful, appropriate measures on all fronts of this challenge.
- **Increase price transparency** by requiring that insurers and health plan administrators provide patients with provider-specific estimates of their out-of-pocket costs for procedures, drugs, or hospital stays. Arkansans deserve access to the information they need to make informed decisions about their health.
- **Institute reference pricing** in the state employee plan to offer greater price transparency, help patients choose affordable care, and pressure low-value hospitals to offer fair and competitive prices.
- **Establish a cost growth goal** to hold insurers and hospitals accountable for delivering quality care at affordable prices. As governor, I will empower a state health commission to collect and monitor health care spending data to control costs for patients and taxpayers.

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Mr. Henderson will have in-person media availability in Fayetteville, Jonesboro, and Little Rock. For media availability, please contact Abby Anderson at 501-454-3348.