

Health Care Law Will Raise Claim Costs In S.D.

SIoux FALLS (AP) — A study by the Society of Actuaries estimates that the new federal health care law will raise medical claims costs in South Dakota by 29 percent.

Medical claims costs are the main driver of health insurance premiums. The study estimates that President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act will raise claims costs nationally by an average of 32 percent per person in the individual health insurance market by 2017. That's partly due to sicker people joining the pool.

The study finds wide disparities among states. The estimates assume every state will expand its Medicaid program.

The report did not make similar estimates for employer plans, the mainstay for workers and their families. The primary impact of Obama's law is on people who don't have insurance through their jobs.

'Obamacare' To Boost Cost Of Claims In Neb.

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A study by a national group of financial-risk analysts says the federal health care law will raise claims costs in Nebraska's individual health insurance market by an average of nearly 31 percent.

The Society of Actuaries estimates that President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act will raise claims costs nationally by an average of 32 percent per person in the individual health insurance market by 2017. That's partly due to sicker people joining the pool.

Medical claims costs are the main driver of health insurance premiums.

The study finds wide disparities among states.

The estimates assume every state will expand its Medicaid program. Gov. Dave Heineman is opposed to expanding Medicaid in Nebraska.

The report did not make similar estimates for employer plans, the mainstay for workers and their families.

S. Dakota To Company: Stop Selling Securities

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation's Division of Securities has ordered an international company to stop selling securities in the state.

The division issued a cease and desist order to Profitable Sunrise, accusing the company and its operators, Roman Novak and Radoslav Novak, of committing fraud.

State officials say Profitable Sunrise sold securities without a license and sold unregistered investment contracts through its website at www.profitablesunrise.com. The website could not be reached on Tuesday.

Officials say investors were told their money would be used to fund short-term, risk-free loans to businesses and all funds deposited were insured against loss by a leading investment bank.

Securities Division Director Mike Youngberg says South Dakotans should be cautious any time they hear of a no-risk, high-return investment.

S.D. Livestock Doing Well Despite Drought

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Livestock are doing well in most areas of South Dakota despite drought-reduced feed and stock water supplies.

The Agriculture Department says in its latest crop and weather report that feed supplies are rated only 47 percent adequate to surplus, compared to 99 percent last year at this time. Stock water supplies are rated only 44 percent adequate, and about two-thirds of the state's pastures and ranges are rated in poor or very poor condition.

But cattle conditions in South Dakota are still rated 75 percent good to excellent, and 78 percent of sheep are in those categories.

The state's winter wheat crop is rated only 29 percent fair to good, due to a lack of soil moisture as winter ends.

USDA Expanding Program To Fight Rural Poverty

BY MEG KINNARD
 Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A federal program intended to reduce poverty and improve life in rural areas through better access to federal funding is expanding to six states, officials said Tuesday.

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack traveled to South Carolina to announce the expansion of the so-called StrikeForce initiative, which already operates in 10 states. The program will now also be available in the Carolinas, the Dakotas, Alabama and Virginia.

The goal of StrikeForce is to help farmers, food producers and other businesses get access to money for projects such as new wells, greenhouses, community gardens, kitchen space, and summer meals for low-income school children. The money is often hard to access due to complicated grant applications, requirements for matching funds, and limited staffing.

The USDA uses U.S. Census data to find areas with poverty rates higher than 20 percent. The agency then works with local officials and community-based organizations to

publicize the program and reach out to potential applicants. One of the areas Vilsack visited Tuesday was Bamberg County, home to South Carolina's fourth-highest unemployment, at 15.3 percent.

"Oftentimes, people fail to realize that 90 percent of persistent poor counties are located in rural areas," Vilsack said during a later stop at the Statehouse in Columbia.

The money has already helped Larry Harris, who has operated a small farm in South Carolina's Sumter County for about 15 years. Harris says he used to farm row crops such as soybeans and corn but, several years ago, learned of a USDA-funded program that could help him build a well to irrigate more profitable specialty vegetable crops. Harris is bound by a contract with USDA to use the well for irrigation for three years. After that, he can use the well as he sees fit.

Other small farmers from neighboring counties have come to see his setup and get ideas for their own projects, Harris said.

"On an acre of land, through these programs you could make more growing vegetables than you could doing row crops," he said.

In addition to increasing profits for farmers, specialty vegetable gardens of the type Harris operates could help reduce obesity rates in poor counties by increasing residents' access to better-quality healthy foods, Vilsack said.

In Sumter County, 74 percent of adults are considered overweight or obese, compared to South Carolina's overall rate of 67.4 percent.

"The key to nutrition is access to foods that are healthy and nutritionally dense," Vilsack said. If farmers grow more of their own fruits and vegetables, he said, "people don't have to rely on a convenience store that has a very limited set of offerings."

South Carolina has been considering asking the USDA for a waiver to allow the state to restrict food stamp recipients to certain purchases with the aim of encouraging healthier eating. Vilsack said his agency was also looking at ways to encourage people to eat better, such as discounting some purchases for food stamp recipients but subsidizing the transactions so that retailers get paid full price.

Nebraska's Soil Moisture Reserve Gone, Expert Says

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska's reserve of soil moisture is gone, compounding the continuing bad news about Nebraska's drought, experts said.

Mark Svoboda, of the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln told as task force Monday that the reserve was amassed during several years of relatively generous rainfall.

But, Svoboda said, "there is no full moisture reserve to tap into this year."

A U.S. Department of Agriculture survey report March said topsoil moisture for farm fields throughout the state was rated 29 percent short or very short this far into March. Subsoil moisture was rated 97 percent short or very short. The drought center said that as of last week 96 percent of the state remained in extreme or exceptional drought.

At the same meeting of the state's Climate Assessment and Response Committee, state climatologist Al Dutcher said some improvement may be ahead because the meetings between cold air to the north and warm air to the south hold potential.

"As systems continue their trek on a weekly basis, we expect them to cross the border into Nebraska, and

we'll see some uptick in moisture," Dutcher said.

Rainfall is crucial over the next two months for people planting corn and soybeans and for the recovery of grazing areas. Typically, Dutcher said, "once we get into the second week of May, we've reached our peak in soil moisture, and we start to decline from there."

The drought harmed several Nebraska crops last year. Corn production, for example, was down 16 percent from 2011 figures, according to a 2012 U.S. Department of Agriculture report.

Nebraska Wheat Board executive director Royce Schaneman said Tuesday that the drought has already harmed the state's potential 2013 wheat harvest.

The dry ground last fall let farmers get fields planted on time, Schaneman said, but there wasn't enough moisture to get much of the crop germinated and out of the ground. And the plants that did come up tended to be smaller and weaker than normal, he said.

The USDA's March survey report for Nebraska farmers said 61 percent of the wheat was rated poor or very poor. That compares with 4 percent rated poor or very poor last year at this time, before the drought took hold.

Regulators Visit Sites For Land-Based Sioux City Casino

SIoux CITY, Iowa (AP) — Developers vying for the right to build a land-based casino in the Sioux City area emphasized Tuesday the accessibility of major highways as state gaming regulators visited the proposed sites.

The five-member panel of the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission toured four sites for several hours before holding a public hearing on who should be given the gambling license in Woodbury County, the *Sioux City Journal* reported. A final decision will be made in April.

Penn National Gaming Co., which operates the Argosy Sioux City riverboat, submitted two proposals for a Hollywood Casino. Its proposal for a casino on 40 acres on the southern edge of the city was the first visit of the day.

"It could not be easier to pull off the interstate onto the casino property," said Linda Cox, the mayor of Salix, which would be near the site.


The rural location has a \$167 million price tag and would include a 150-room hotel.

The commission's remaining visits were in downtown Sioux City. Sioux City Entertainment first showed off the historic Battery Building, where they want to build a Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. An estimated 500 supporters of the \$118.5 million project greeted the commission.

"I think this is a great building that can be transformed into a fantastic entertainment destination," said Bill Warner, who heads the Hard Rock proposal.

Ho-Chunk Inc. developers behind the Warrior Casino & Hotel then gave their presentation for a \$122 million project slated for the Davidson Building and Warrior Hotel. The presentation at a nearby theater included a replica blackjack table and video explaining their accessibility to Interstate 29.

"It's going to really stand out and be an iconic structure," said Ho-Chunk CEO Lance Morgan about 1930s-era building.

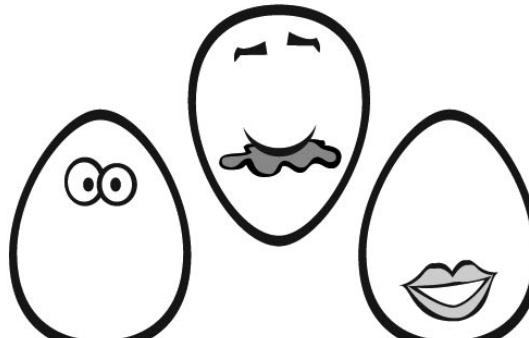


THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

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FINISH THE FUNNY FACES



Draw the missing parts of these funny egg faces. Add hair and hats and make them egg-ceptionally silly!

Standards Link: Visual Arts: Use a variety of media.

Weekly Writing Corner

Easter Bunny Spotted!

Students write a news story about a sighting of the Easter Bunny.

My family and I went into my house. The Easter Bunny was eating our food. It was only 1:00 at night and the Easter Bunny was really hungry.

Devin, 2nd grade

The Bunny Buddies' Eggstra Fun Page

WARNING! DON'T DO THIS PAGE ALONE!

Find a buddy and do this page together! If this page looks easy, find "somebunny" younger to be your buddy. If this page looks hard, find "somebunny" older to help you.

The Easter Basket Mystery

Which Easter basket belongs to Buzz? Which one belongs to Beeper? Read the description of each bunny's basket. Draw a line from each bunny to its basket.

Beeper has a basket with one candy bunny, three flowers and two eggs.

Buzz has a basket with three eggs, two flowers and one candy bunny.

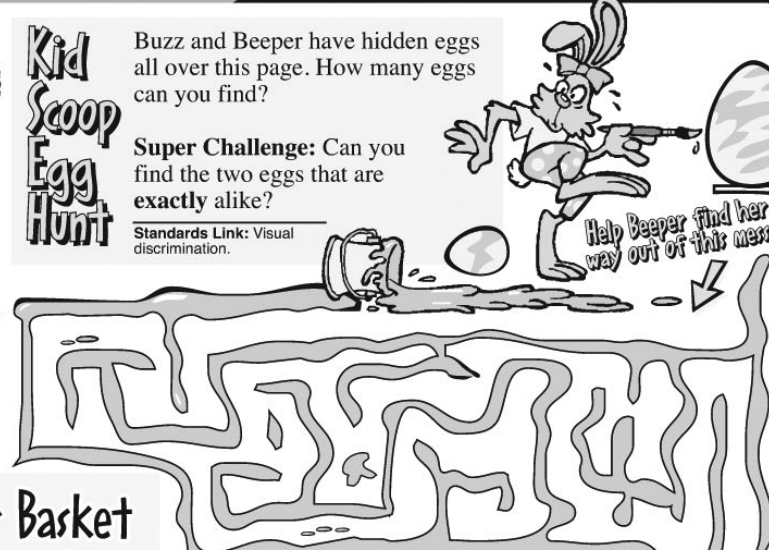
Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

Kid Scoop Egg Hunt

Beeper and Beeper have hidden eggs all over this page. How many eggs can you find?

Super Challenge: Can you find the two eggs that are exactly alike?

Standards Link: Visual discrimination.



Help Beeper find her way out of this maze!

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. Then look for each word in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.


M	A	B	U	D	D	Y	O	Z	Z
C	E	B	K	P	A	T	C	H	S
H	R	A	U	T	Z	Z	U	B	R
T	A	Z	S	N	F	R	M	E	E
O	T	R	X	Y	N	Q	S	E	W
R	Y	N	D	J	K	Y	G	P	O
R	M	N	O	V	U	T	G	E	L
A	A	R	E	T	S	A	E	R	F
C	N	E	D	D	I	H	O	K	Z

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Crazy Carrot Patch

Can you find at least 10 silly things in Buzz's carrot patch?

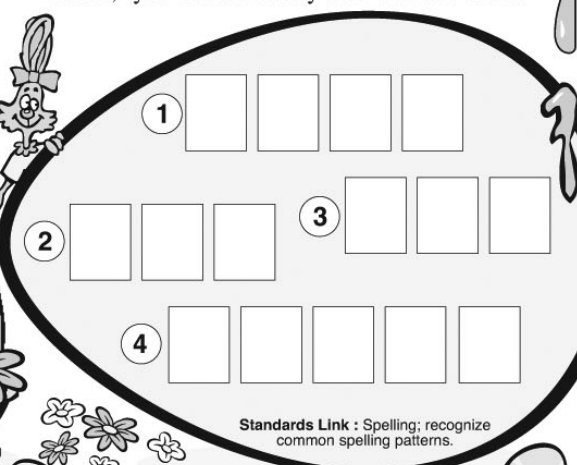
Standards Link: Visual Discrimination: finding similarities and differences in common objects



Easter Words

Fill in the boxes in the egg with words made from the letters in "Easter."

Challenge: If a letter appears only once in "Easter," you can use it only once in a new word.



Standards Link: Spelling; recognize common spelling patterns.

Write On!

Long Neck News

Pretend you woke up one morning with the neck of a giraffe. Write a new story about being the first person with such a neck.


Deadline: April 21 Published: Week of May 19
 Please include your school and grade.

Send your story to:
 Press & Dakotan
 C/o Noelle Schlechter
 319 Walnut Street
 Yankton, SD 57078
 605-665-7811, ext 112

Newspaper Egg Hunt

At Easter time, there are lots of pictures of eggs in the newspaper. Go on an egg hunt through the paper. How many eggs can you find?

Standards Link: Science; classify common objects by a similar characteristic.



BEYOND Kid Scoop

Scrambled Easter Eggs!

Look through the newspaper for the letters that spell "Easter Eggs." Cut them out. With a buddy, take turns mixing up the letters and spelling a new word. A player gets one point for each letter used.

Standards Link: Spelling; recognize common spelling patterns.

Breaking news: With Easter just around the corner, the WMES news team has recently spotted the Easter Bunny stealing eggs from Kevin's Chicken Farm. Apparently, he claims he didn't know the chickens belonged to Kevin. As we look back at the video footage from the secret camera, it looks like it may have been on purpose because he laughed as he ran away. Is the Easter Bunny a thief? We'll be back with the story from the news team after this commercial break.

Hannah, 5th grade

For the first time in years, we have an Easter Bunny sighting. He was spotted by Taylor M. She said he had pink fur with a yellow tail, blue eyes and a red nose. She also said he was wearing an Easter egg printed shirt. She spotted him on her front lawn leaving eggs under a tree. She also said that she spotted him at midnight when she got up to get her snack on the night before Easter. During her interview, Taylor said she was very astonished to see him.

Caeleigh, 4th grade

When I went to bed, I looked out of my window and I saw the Easter Bunny. Then I saw him hiding eggs.

Carson, 1st grade

Do you know who spotted the Easter Bunny? I do. Taylor Swift spotted the bunny in her kitchen at 3:03 in the morning. He was dressing a turkey for Easter but she thought it was Thanksgiving.

Sebastian, 1st grade