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Poor Health Policy

Government can and should secure a safety net for those who cannot obtain healthcare coverage, but 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, an 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; where there's failure, subsidize expansion. 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 health care market. Compassion for the uninsured is located in loosening the state's iron grip on their health care choices and delivering basic services to the neediest in a common-sense, cost-effective way.

— Jay Webber, Morris Plains

The writer, a Republican, is an assemblyman representing the 26th District in Morris and Passaic counties.