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Christie: This Will Be The Most Aggressive Law In The Country, Providing Access To Addiction Care

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

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Gov. Christie: This Will Be Most Aggressive Law In The Country, Providing A...



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Transcript:

Governor Christie: I am very happy to have delivered to the legislature yesterday the draft legislation that we believe needs to be done to begin to address the opioid crisis in a much more aggressive way. Based upon my staff's review of the laws across the entire country, they believe and have told me that this will be the most aggressive law in the country in terms of providing access to care. Now, once we do that I need places like Cooper and our other health care providers across the state to step up and invest as well. The state will invest and we will force the insurance industry to invest but we need these folks to invest as well. So I come to Cooper today with an ask as well. I want all the senior executives at Cooper, medical staff, to be looking at ways that you can help to expand access to drug and alcohol abuse treatment in the state. All the insurance coverage in the world won't matter if we don't have a bed to put that person in. If we don't have a group of healthcare providers to give them the tools they need to recover from their addiction. And what I've been told before by healthcare providers, not Cooper specifically, but others has been that well the reason we're not expanding is because the money's not there. Well we increased our investment 127 million dollars this past year and now we are going to bring the insurance industry to the table to make sure that they're not denying people coverage for this care, we expanded Medicaid so that the poor in this state would have access to this care and we now know from 2013 prior to Medicaid expansion to today a five-fold increase over 14,000 people as we stand here today are receiving drug and alcohol abuse treatment under our Medicaid program. And we know that the wealthy have always had access to this care for their families and loved ones and so now I need the institution's, the leading institutions like Cooper, RWJ, St. Barnabas, the folks at Meridian, Morristown, all the major institutions, Hackensack to be able to step up and be the leaders and saying we'll provide the capacity so that people won't be

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turned away. I hope that I don't have to do that by mandating it. I hope I don't have to do that but I want to assure everybody in this room if I have to do it by mandating it I will do it. We need everyone to step up in this fight because our children dying and it is unacceptable to me and I will not leave office saying I wish I would have done this or that. I am going to do everything in the next 359 days, not that I'm counting, to make sure that I do everything I can to try to lessen the tragedy in this state for families who are dealing with this awful problem.

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