



Laboratories Of Failure

*After High-Profile Troubles On The Federal ObamaCare Exchange,
State Exchanges Are Still Struggling*

OREGON

Politico Headline: “Oregon’s ObamaCare Sign-Up Is An ‘Epic Failure’” (Paige Winfield Cunningham, “Oregon’s ObamaCare Sign-Up Is An ‘Epic Failure,’” [Politico](#), 11/26/13)

In Its First Month Of Operation, Oregon’s ObamaCare Exchange “Failed To Enroll A Single Person.” “Oregon’s problem-plagued online health insurance marketplace has failed to enroll a single person since it opened a month ago. To date, the state has received just 4,260 paper applications as part of the national health care overhaul law, and the Cover Oregon website still can’t tell people what subsidies they are eligible to receive.” (“Cover Oregon Has Enrolled Zero People Online In 1st Month,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/30/13)

Oregon’s ObamaCare Exchange Website “Still Doesn’t Work More Than Three Months After Launch.” “Cover Oregon’s online enrollment system still doesn’t work more than three months after it was supposed to launch, and the state has hired or reassigned hundreds of workers to manually process applications. Officials say they hope the online system will be operational by March.” (“Oregon’s ObamaCare Online Enrollment System Still Doesn’t Work More Than 3 Months After It Was Supposed To Launch,” [The Associated Press](#), 1/11/14)

- **“Cover Oregon Still Does Not Have A Fully Operational Online Exchange And Enrollees Have Had To Use Paper Applications.”** (Anna Palmer and Jennifer Haberkorn, “Democrats Blame Big Business For Botched Rollout,” [Politico](#), 1/9/14)

Oregon’s ObamaCare Exchange Resorted To Telling Oregonians To Seek Coverage Outside Of The Exchange. “Oregon’s troubled health insurance exchange began robocalling applicants Friday, warning them that if they don’t receive enrollment confirmation by Monday, they should seek coverage elsewhere for Jan. 1. ‘If you haven’t heard from us by Dec. 23, it is unlikely your application will be processed for Jan. 1 insurance coverage,’ a woman’s voice on the pre-recorded call from Cover Oregon says. ‘If you want to be sure you have insurance coverage starting Jan. 1, you have other options.’” (Brent Hunsberger, “Cover Oregon: If You Don’t Hear From Us By Monday, Seek Coverage Elsewhere,” [Oregonian](#), 12/21/13)

Oregon Officials Are Considering Scrapping The State’s ObamaCare Website And Forwarding People To The Federal ObamaCare Exchange As The Site Isn’t Expected To Work Until After The Enrollment Deadline. “Oregon’s insurance exchange takes the word ‘glitch’ to a whole new level. Things are so bad that Cover Oregon still can’t process an entire enrollment online and isn’t expected to be repaired until after open enrollment ends in March. That has state officials considering scrapping the whole thing and moving to HealthCare.gov, even though it would be considered a significant political defeat for Democratic Gov. John Kitzhaber, who is seeking reelection this year.” (Paige Winfield Cunningham, *Politico’s*

Pulse, 1/15/14)

Cover Oregon Officials Have Resigned Due To The Exchange's Failure

The Director Of Oregon's ObamaCare Exchange Has Resigned After An Embarrassing Launch In Which The Website Has Been Unable To Enroll A Single Person. "King is the second official connected to the exchange to resign. He came under fire when the online enrollment system failed to go live in October. Technical problems with the exchange have been an embarrassment to the state and forced Oregonians to apply using paper applications. The state had to hire or reassign nearly 500 people to process applications by hand." (Gosia Wozniacka, "Oregon Health Exchange Director Resigns," [The Associated Press](#), 1/2/14)

In December, The Chief Information Officer Of Cover Oregon, Who Oversaw The Creation Of Oregon's ObamaCare Exchange Announced Her Resignation. "Carolyn Lawson, the embattled state technology executive who oversaw much of the development of Oregon's troubled health insurance exchange, has resigned for personal reasons. It was Lawson, chief information officer at the Oregon Health Authority, who decided the state could manage the complex exchange project itself, rather than hire a private-sector systems integrator, a decision since criticized by her superiors. Lawson also was close to Oracle Corp., the California technology giant that has been blamed for doing shoddy work and repeatedly missing deadlines." (Jeff Manning, "Cover Oregon: Official Who Oversaw Development Of Health Exchange, Carolyn Lawson, Resigns," [Oregonian](#), 12/19/13)

HAWAII

Nearly Three Months After Hawaii's ObamaCare Exchange Went Live, The Website Continued To Face Problems That Affected The Federal ObamaCare Exchange Website. "When it comes to Affordable Care Act enrollment, there's trouble in paradise. The Hawaii Health Connector, the state's sign-up portal, has been bedeviled by some of the same types of technical issues that affected Healthcare.gov. While Obama administration officials say the online problems have been resolved at the federal level, Hawaii is among some states still facing stubborn challenges. Hawaii is among 14 states with their own online enrollment web sites." (Peter Maer, "Hawaii's Health Insurance Exchange Is No Paradise," [CBS News](#), 12/26/13)

- **Hawaii's ObamaCare Exchange Had Been Stricken With Technical Difficulties From The Very Beginning.** "The insurance exchange — a key component of President Barack Obama's federal health care overhaul — hasn't been able to sell any insurance in Hawaii because of problems with the software at the heart of the marketplace. Consumers can't see plans, even though a variety of options from two insurers have been approved to be sold by the state's insurance division." ("Hawaii Relaunching ObamaCare Exchanges After Not Selling Any Health Insurance Due To Software Problems," [The Associated Press](#), 10/10/13)

Hawaii Received \$203.4 Million In Taxpayer Dollars To Operate The State's ObamaCare Exchange. "Following a year-end enrollment surge, the Connector system reported 2,015 people signed up for the plan in time to for coverage beginning January 1. Hawaii has received \$203.4 million in federal funds to operate the Connector. So far, that works out to nearly \$100,745 in federal grant money per enrollee." (Peter Maer, "Hawaii's Health Insurance Exchange Is No Paradise," [CBS News](#), 12/26/13)

Hawaii's ObamaCare Website Continues To Falls Short Of Connecting People To The State's ObamaCare Exchange. "People on the front lines of Hawaii's sign-up say the Connector falls far short of its name. Waikiki Health, a federally qualified center where experts help applicants navigate the complex ObamaCare process, has been able to enroll only 5 percent of the dozens of applicants who have come to its offices." (Peter Maer, "Hawaii's Health Insurance Exchange Is No Paradise," [CBS News](#), 12/26/13)

The Director Of Hawaii's ObamaCare Exchange Has Resigned

The Director Of Hawaii's ObamaCare Exchange Website Announced That She Would Resign Less Than Two Months After The Site's Launch. "The executive director of Hawaii's ObamaCare health insurance marketplace will resign on Dec. 6, the first marketplace director in the country to step down since the marketplaces went live on Oct. 1. The marketplace announced the resignation of Coral Andrews, the current executive director, on Friday. She will be replaced by Tom Matsuda, who has been overseeing Obamacare implementation for Gov. Neil Abercrombie (D)." (Dylan Scott, "Director Of Hawaii's ObamaCare Marketplace To Resign," [Talking Points Memo](#), 11/22/13)

MARYLAND

Democrat Governor Martin O'Malley Promised That Maryland's State ObamaCare Exchange Would "Lead The Nation." "Barely 24 hours after President Obama signed his landmark health law, Gov. Martin O'Malley promised that Maryland would 'lead the nation' in putting it in place. ... But when Tuesday arrived, Maryland's Web site stumbled badly. People couldn't log on, forcing state officials to delay the opening of the exchange for four hours. Even after it opened, many frustrated users were unable to create accounts, the first step in buying coverage. All told, fewer than 100 people have managed to enroll." (Lena H. Sun, "Maryland's Health Insurance Web Site Stumbles Badly In First Days," [The Washington Post](#), 10/4/13)

Maryland's \$107 Million ObamaCare Exchange Website Continues To Be Plagued By Glitches. "Maryland's \$107 million online insurance marketplace crashed on its launch Oct. 1, and problems continued into this week with Monday's hours-long shutdown. Plagued by technical problems and feuding contractors, the website still has not delivered on its promise to be a national model for health care." (Erin Cox, "Faltering Exchange Could Mean Trouble For O'Malley, Brown," [Baltimore Sun](#), 12/24/13)

- **Earlier This Month, A New Glitch Found On The Maryland ObamaCare Exchange That Directs Marylanders To "Agencies In Other States."** "Marylanders who use the federal health reform site to search for navigators who can help them enroll in health plans in-person are getting directed to agencies in other states. The problem lies with a glitch in the federal website that occurs when Marylanders type in their zip code. The website directs users to navigators in Pennsylvania, Virginia and other states." (Andrea Walker, "Glitch In Federal Health Site Directing Marylanders To Other States," [Baltimore Sun](#), 1/6/14)

Website Problems Kept Up To 5,000 Health Care Consumers From Enrolling In Maryland's Exchange Before The January 1 Deadline. "The state's marylandhealthconnection.gov website crashed shortly after it launched Oct. 1 and was barely functional for much of the month. While the website has since improved, Maryland Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown said Tuesday at a state House committee hearing in Annapolis that 'a few hundred to upward of 5,000' people weren't able to enroll by Jan. 1 because of the technical troubles." (Jennifer Corbett Dooren, "Maryland Won't Switch Over To Healthcare.gov," [The Wall Street Journal's Washington Wire](#), 1/14/14)

The Executive Director Of Maryland's ObamaCare Exchange Resigned Two Months After The Launch

The Maryland Official In Charge Of The State's Health Insurance Exchange Resigned "Amid Continuing Technical Problems That Have Hampered The State's Online Enrollment Efforts." "The Maryland official who directly oversaw the rollout of Maryland's health insurance exchange resigned Friday amid continuing technical problems that have hampered the state's online enrollment efforts. After an emergency session Friday night, the board of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange accepted the

resignation of Rebecca Pearce, its executive director, and thanked her in a statement for working 'tirelessly and with tremendous dedication' for more than two years." (John Wagner And Lena H. Sun, "Rebecca Pearce, Director Of Maryland's Ailing Health Insurance Exchange, Resigns," [The Washington Post](#), 12/6/13)

MINNESOTA

Problems With Minnesota's ObamaCare Exchange Continue To Occur As Glitches Hamper Enrollment. "But in recent weeks, even as many of the problems with the federal exchange seemed to ease, problems with MNSure were multiplying. In addition to a sporadically functioning website and hard-to-reach call center, state insurance companies complained that data on enrollees from MNSure were filled with inconsistencies and errors. About 1,000 people learned they had to re-enroll after being notified that they did not qualify for federal tax subsidies, when they actually did." (Patrick Condon, "Even In Willing States, Health Law's Rollout Rocky," [The Associated Press](#), 12/21/13)

30,000 To 40,000 Applicants To Minnesota's ObamaCare Exchange "Were Incorrectly Denied Premium Subsidies Or Coverage On Public Programs." "State and county officials are double-checking 30,000 to 40,000 applications filed this fall on the MNSure health insurance exchange to determine if people were incorrectly denied premium subsidies or coverage on public programs. While most determinations on the exchange were correct, a few of them wrongly denied people access to benefits to which they are entitled next year, MNSure spokeswoman Jenni Bowring-McDonough said. 'We are working to ensure that everyone who is eligible receives the right assistance in the right program beginning January 1, 2014,' she said." (Jeremy Olson, "MNSure Will Get A Discount Double-Check," [Star Tribune](#), 11/27/13)

As Minnesota's ObamaCare Exchange Was Enduring Glitches, Its Executive Director Took A Beach Vacation

"MNSure Executive Director April Todd-Malmlov Took A Weeklong Vacation To Costa Rica With State Medicaid Director James Golden Late Last Month." (Baird Helgeson, "MNSure Director Under Fire For Tropical Vacation," [Star Tribune](#), 12/16/13)

- **Democrat Governor Mark Dayton Defended MNSure Director's Costa Rican Vacation Despite The Website Problems.** "On Thursday, Gov. Mark Dayton defended Todd-Malmlov's right to take a pre-scheduled vacation. He made no attempt to defend MNSure's ongoing problems. 'I know that the executive director worked extraordinarily hard for months now, probably all of last year and my understanding was this was a long-planned vacation where financial commitments were made,' Dayton said. 'I don't know enough of the details, but it was obviously a critical time for MNSure and it is ultimately her responsibility.'" (Jennifer Brooks, "Dayton Defends MNSure Chief's Vacation," [Star Tribune](#), 12/17/13)

The "Embattled" Director Of MNSure Resigned "Amid Mounting Criticism Of Her Leadership And The Troubled Rollout Of The New Health Care Program." "The embattled director of the state's fledgling health insurance exchange resigned Tuesday amid mounting criticism of her leadership and the troubled rollout of the new health care program. MNSure executive director April Todd-Malmlov left her \$136,000-a-year post during a closed-door meeting with the program's executive committee. The board named Scott Leitz, the state's assistant commissioner of health care, to the newly created position of interim CEO while it conducts a national search for a permanent chief executive. 'MNSure must do better,' Leitz said. 'If there are problems or mistakes, we will acknowledge them and fix them.'" (Baird Helgeson And Jackie Crosby, "Embattled Mnsure Director Resigns Amid Increasing Criticism," [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#), 12/18/13)

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts' ObamaCare Exchange Website "Has Been Troubled Since It Launched Oct. 1." "The Connector's website, designed to allow consumers to compare health plans and determine eligibility for subsidies, has been troubled since it launched Oct. 1." (Chelsea Conaboy, "With Connector Website Unworkable, State Processing Insurance Applications Offline," [Boston Globe](#), 12/21/13)

- **Core Functions Of The Exchange Website Has "Simply Not Worked."** "The site has locked users out of their accounts and delivered persistent error messages. Parts of the system designed to automatically determine applicants' eligibility for tax credits and to deliver key information to insurers simply have not worked." (Chelsea Conaboy, "With Connector Website Unworkable, State Processing Insurance Applications Offline," [Boston Globe](#), 12/21/13)

In The First Two Months Of The ObamaCare Launch, Not One Person Enrolled Through Massachusetts's ObamaCare Exchange. "With three weeks left in the year, not one of the thousands of Massachusetts residents who need to enroll in new health insurance plans by Jan. 1 has been able to do so through the state insurance marketplace that was revamped to comply with the national Affordable Care Act." (Chelsea Conaboy, "Problems Continue To Plague Mass. Health Marketplace," [Boston Globe](#), 12/7/13)

- **The State Had To Revert To Backup System And Paper Notifications For Health Plan Enrollments.** "Massachusetts has reverted to using an alternative software system and paper notifications for residents seeking new insurance, a significant black eye for a system that was held up as a national model for providing coverage after it debuted in 2007." (Tracy Jan, "Mass., Vt. Halt Payments To Firm Behind Health Sites," [Boston Globe](#), 12/26/13)