



## TOP STORIES

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## Medicaid costs stir budget debate

By: YNN Staff

A conservative think tank and two Republican state leaders banded together Tuesday to talk about what they call a solution to the state's Medicaid crunch.

Medicaid currently makes up 28 percent of the state's budget.

Members of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, State Rep. Lois Kolkhorst and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst said there is a tug of war between Medicaid and education. If Medicaid is not reformed, it will cost from \$10 to \$14 billion more in just two years.

"To put that into real terms, that would require a 3 to 4.5 cent sales tax increase enacted right now to come up with that amount of money," Arlene Wohlgenuth with the Texas Public Policy Foundation said. "That is totally unreasonable because it would put Texas at the highest in the nation for sales tax increase."

One of the solutions suggested was to replace Medicaid with a state-driven TexHealth program, which would put Medicaid patients into the private market and provide support for individuals on a sliding scale.

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