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# Bentley urging support for his state lottery bill

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By Kelvin Reynolds, Reporter [CONNECT](#)

TUSCALOOSA, AL (WBRC) - Governor Robert Bentley is crisscrossing the state hoping to gain support for his lottery plan.

He called a special session of the state legislature that starts next week.

On Tuesday, he visited the ARC of Tuscaloosa, a center that works with adults with mental and physical disabilities.

"These individuals may actually get sick and may die because we are inadequately funding this program," Bentley said.

The governor says the state is underfunding Medicaid by more than \$85 million. He's warned legislators that the poor, elderly and sick would hurt the most by a shortfall.

"The money needs to go where the needs are. And the needs are for the people in this state who were born into poverty, through no fault of their own and they have to have healthcare," according to Bentley.

Medicaid helps pay for the care people receive at the ARC. Bentley believes a lottery would pump millions into the general fund help fill the shortfall in Medicaid.

"What we've got to do in Alabama right now is to let the people decide if they want to help individuals like this, those are less fortunate and those who have difficulties by voting for the lottery," the governor went on to say.

But many in Alabama, including the legislature, remain skeptical whether Alabama needs a lottery and if it will generate the kind of money Governor Bentley thinks it will.

In contrast to Bentley's plan to funnel lottery proceeds into the General Fund, Sen. Jim McClendon says he will present his own state lottery plan that would only fund Medicaid and education.

The special session dealing with a lottery begins Monday, August 15 in Montgomery.

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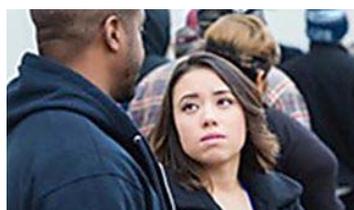
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