Republican governor Rick Scott's push to privatize Medicaid in Florida is highly controversial—not least because the health care business Scott handed over to his wife when he took office could reap a major profit if the legislation becomes law.

Scott and Florida Republicans are currently trying to enact a sweeping Medicaid reform bill that would give HMOs and other private health care companies unprecedented control over the government health care program for the poor.

Among the companies that stand to benefit from the bill is Solantic, a chain of urgent-care clinics aimed at providing emergency services to walk-in customers. The Florida governor founded Solantic in 2001, only a few years after he resigned as the CEO of hospital giant Columbia/HCA amid a massive Medicare fraud scandal. In January, he transferred his $62 million stake in Solantic to his wife, Ann Scott, a homemaker involved in various charitable organizations.

Florida Democrats and independent legal experts say this handover hardly absolves Scott of a major conflict of interest. As part of a federally approved pilot program that began in 2005, certain Medicaid patients in Florida were allowed to start using their Medicaid dollars at private clinics like Solantic.

The Medicaid bill that Scott is now pushing would expand the pilot privatization program to the entire state of Florida, offering Solantic a huge new business opportunity.

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