

Action Alert: Close the Coverage Gap in North Carolina by Expanding Medicaid

Date: 4/21/2021

Please contact your state representatives - Representatives and Senators - and urge them to support closing the coverage gap by expanding Medicaid in our state and urge them to reach across the aisle to encourage representatives from the opposite party to do the same to help citizens of NC. Ask your senator to support Senate Bill 402 ("Close the Medicaid Coverage Gap") and ask your representative to support House Bill 470 ("Medicaid Expansion"). To find your representatives, use this link: <https://www.ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>.

Why now?

Major changes have occurred to make Medicaid expansion a better possibility this session:

- The American Rescue Plan provides an additional \$1.7 billion in federal funds to support Medicaid expansion - cutting in half the cost to North Carolinians (from 10% to 5% of the total cost) with no need to cost share for up to six years. This extra money could move people off Medicaid into private insurance plans which has been a concern of those unwilling to expand Medicaid.
- North Carolina transforms to Medicaid Managed Care on July 1, which has been a condition for many legislators before they would consider expanding Medicaid.
- The global pandemic persists. Many have lost jobs or will lose them along with employer sponsored health insurance.
- Other states which have resisted Medicaid expansion in the past have begun movement towards it: Alabama, Wyoming, and Wisconsin.
- NC Legislators previously opposed to expansion have indicated some willingness to expand benefits to those in the coverage gap, particularly those from rural areas.

Who is in the coverage gap?

- Currently more than 600,000 working North Carolinians are unable to pay for private insurance but are not eligible for Medicaid.
- Many of those in the coverage gap are citizens who form the backbone of our economy, our essential workers - grocery store clerks, restaurant workers, gig workers, etc.

What would expanded Medicaid provide?

- Critically needed **access to health care**, medication and treatment, as well as help for substance abuse and chronic conditions like diabetes
- Tens of thousands of full- and part-time **jobs** would be created in all sectors, including health-related jobs, construction, retail, professional jobs, state or local government, etc.
- Support for **rural hospitals and health-care related services** which are critical sources of employment for those in rural areas
- **Protection from medical debt and bankruptcy** for families living on low wages

- **Funding to reduce maternal mortality** in the state by allowing coverage for new mothers through 12 months postpartum

We believe, based on our testimonies of Equality and Community, that quality healthcare should be available to all.

For more facts and information on Medicaid Expansion, go [here](#)