



Legislative Brief

JANUARY 18, 2017

MEDICAID EXPANSION THIS LAST TWO YEARS WAS TRULY A GIFT FROM HEAVEN!

For many years, Europe and much of the rest of the world minus America provided healthcare for all of its citizens. Medicaid was first adopted along with Medicare in 1965 under President Lyndon Johnson. It provided for hospital insurance for seniors under social security and healthcare for needy children.

Expanding Medicaid did more than extend health care to uninsured residents—many of whom are working. Over the past few months Families USA have been closely monitoring the movement to expand Medicaid. Their research shows how residents and state economies will benefit from the expansion.

The influx of federal dollars boost states' economic activity. Numerous states who originally opposed may have now joined 31 states including Alaska's recent decision to expand. In the 31 states that have accepted the federal government's 100 percent payment for all families below 138% of the federal poverty level. This means your family income is below \$16,243 a year. Previously under Medicaid eligibility was limited to poor children, parents and the disabled.

Under the current law, the federal government pays the full Cost of eligible beneficiaries for this year. The federal share of the costs drops to 95% in 2017 and the state pays the other 5%. The federal share drops to 90% in 2020 and Ohio pays 10%.

Many states with Republican governors particularly in the South refused the federal healthcare guarantee for their poor families primarily because it was connected to the healthcare created by Barack Obama known as Obamacare insurance.

"Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor "Go and come again, tomorrow I will give it"- when you have it with you.

(Proverbs 3:27-28 NRSV)

**CALL AND URGE YOUR
CONGRESSMAN TO
VOTE NO TO
ELIMINATING
MEDICAID, MEDICARE
AND SOCIAL SECURITY!**

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Ohio Council of Churches (OCC)

6161 Busch Blvd. Suite 100

Columbus, OH 43229-2553

Phone: 614/885-9590

E-mail: mail@ohcouncilchs.org

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**You are welcome to copy or quote
from the Legislative Brief.
Tom Smith, Editor**

Governor Kasich deserves the major credit for his support of the Medicaid Expansion despite vocal opposition from Republicans in Ohio's legislature. Kasich's administration released a report that Ohio's 2014 Medicaid expansion has improved the health and reduced the financial hardship for hundreds of thousands of poor Ohio families. The analysis requested by members of the Ohio General Assembly found that among the 702,000 who gained coverage as of May 2016 that 75% were previously uninsured for healthcare coverage.

More than one in four has been diagnosed with at least one chronic condition, most commonly high blood Pressure or high cholesterol and included 2% with Cancer. About a third suffered from depression and anxiety disorder. 32% were diagnosed with substance abuse or dependence. Forty-three percent were employed.

State Medicaid Director Barb Sears said, "The report clearly illustrates the benefits of extending chronic health conditions and making it easier to find and keep a job."

Expansion has pushed Ohio's Medicaid roll to more than 3 million at a cost of \$25.3 billion. The *Columbus Dispatch* says, "The Kasich administration intends to maintain Medicaid expansion in the new 2 year budget seeing this as critical to helping to lift people out of poverty, supporting the working poor and

treating those in need of mental-health and addiction treatment."

Expansion has helped hospitals reduce overflowing emergency room treatment and uncompensated healthcare.

Although the state begins to incur some costs in the expansion in 2017, it is only projected to be \$150 million as the state's share. It has reduced the share of uninsured people among poor working adults to 14%, the lowest ever reported. It is an 18% decrease from 2012.

Two-Thirds of the enrollees reported improved access to medical care from the days of emergency room only. They also have benefited from the availability to doctors prescriptions for needed medications. A third have said they have needed fewer trips to the hospital when they can see local physicians. About half have said Medicaid coverage has made it easier to continue working and meeting job requirements.

Ohio was one of 31 states to expand universal care action network under Obamacare, allowing working-age adults without dependent children to qualify for Medicaid Expansion coverage.

52.1% said it was easier to secure and maintain employment, with that number increasing to 74.8% for those who were currently unemployed.

Let your legislator know that health care for those in poverty benefits everyone. †††