



# Legislative Brief

March 15, 2017

## REMOVING MEDICAID EXPANSION FOR THE POOR IS UNTHINKABLE!

OHIANS should join Governor Kasich's concern for a continuance of Medicaid Expansion for those families near poverty. Tweet President Trump that low-income families need to continue healthcare and strongly request that he continue funding Medicaid Expansion for Ohio and all states that request it.

President Trump and the Republican Congress have pledged to repeal the Affordable Health Care Act and replace it with something better.

Governor Kasich on CBS News "Face the Nation" said, "Hardliners in his own party would probably push to just get rid of the whole thing," even if that resulted in 20 million Americans losing their healthcare insurance."

Congressman Jim Jordan, Ohio District 4, is one of the conservatives in the U.S. House of Representatives responded to Kasich's remarks saying, "Republicans in Congress didn't promise to repeal it except we're going to keep the Medicaid Expansion."

Since this funding goes to guarantee health care to families in poverty, I believe that Congressman Jordan is a man of faith in God and can be persuaded to reconsider his decision. I worked with Jim when he was a State Senator in Ohio and he led the fight to prevent casinos in Ohio. He was very concerned about many Ohioans losing money that they needed to provide food and housing for their families. I pray that Jim will rethink his intention to eliminate health care for over 700,000 low-income Ohio families. Those families may never be able to afford medical care that can keep their children and their spouse healthy. There are many other programs that are funded by the federal government that are not as important to those for healthy families and retaining their jobs.

Governor Kasich has vigorously urged his fellow Republicans to change the bill that the House of Representatives have drafted that calls for a rollback of the Medicaid Expansion. Their plan has also been to phase-out of federal subsidies to help low-income individuals purchase health care insurance.

Kasich blasted the House plan as "inadequate and unacceptable". He went to Washington D.C. to meet with President Trump about the need for Medicaid Expansion.

I called and emailed my Congressman Pat Tiberi and ask him as a Catholic, to allow Kasich's request to be met since he now holds the Governor's seat in Congress. Have you called you Congressperson?

*"All you inhabitants of the world,  
you who live on the earth,  
when a signal is raised on the  
mountains, look!  
When a trumpet is blown,  
listen!"*

(Isaiah 18:3 NRSV)

As members of a Faith  
Community, we are  
being called to  
help those less  
fortunate than us  
and ask our  
legislators  
to save their  
**MEDICAID EXPANSION!**

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

The Affordable Health Care Act has enrolled over 230,000 Ohioans for 2017.

One of the important considerations in replacing the ACA is to protect those with pre-existing conditions that includes 5.1 million Ohioans. Everyone knows that it is extremely difficult for these individuals to obtain healthcare at any reasonable cost on the open insurance market if they can get it at all. A second factor is to allow parents to keep their children on their insurance plan until the child is 26. A third consideration is to not allow insurance companies to charge women more than men. Fourth is a cap on coverage limit on what must be paid in a year. More than 105 million patients were helped by the ban on lifetime limits.

Finally, service that keeps patients healthy such as immunizations and cancer screenings must be covered with no cost to patients.

It is very important that all voters know but the elimination will cost Ohioans hundreds of millions a year, if the state continues the Medicaid Expansion.

Advocates for the poor and leaders of faith communities have applauded Gov. Kasich for maintaining Medicaid Expansion. They have appreciated his efforts to convince Congress not to toss Obamacare without a replacement that would preserve coverage for all Ohioans.

Conservatives in Congress are pushing to scrap the Medicaid Expansion along with the rest of ACA, but Republican Governors from states that accepted the expansion are pleading to keep it as it now stands. Thirty-one states accepted the expansion and are glad that they did as it covers 11 million low-income people below the 138% of the federal poverty level. The Republican House of Representatives seem to be following Rep. Jim Jordan's present direction, but in the Senate where many Senators represent states that adopted the Medicaid Expansion,

they are more inclined to consider Governor Kasich's plan.

More than 220,000 people in Ohio may not be able to afford care for mental illness or substance disease such as addiction to prescription drugs. A Harvard Medical School and New York University predict that not only would nearly 1 million people in Ohio lose health coverage through Medicaid or federally subsidized private insurance policies, but thousands would have to find other ways to pay for substance abuse treatment at a time when deaths of drug abuse in Ohio are rising.

Medicaid Expansion helped reduce Ohio's uninsured rate to 6.5 % in 2015 down from 11% in 2013.

Expansion also has helped hospitals reduce overflowing emergency care treatment and uncompensated health care.

Although the state begins to incur costs of the expansion in 2017, projected \$150 million as the state's share, it has reduced the share of uninsured people among the poor working age adults to 14%, the lowest ever reported. It is an 18% drop from 2013.

Two-thirds of the enrollees reported improved access to medical care and filling of prescriptions. A third said they made fewer trips to the emergency room of hospitals for care. About half said Medicaid coverage made it easier to continue working and meeting their job requirements.

Of the 688,000 Ohioans benefitting from Medicaid Expansion, about 51.2% live in the 80 counties that voted for Trump for President.

If Ohio's Senators and Representatives in Congress wipe out Medicaid Expansion they will also imperil thousands of constituents and most likely the financial health of Ohio's Community hospitals. Eliminating Medicaid Expansion will surely threaten many Ohio lives and many Ohio jobs.