



Sarasota County DEMOCRATIC PARTY

PETITION NAME: Medicaid Expansion Petition

TALKING POINTS FOR MEDICAID EXPANSION

Petition to Expand Medicaid in Florida - Talking Point RECAP

- We have the chance to provide health insurance to over 700,000 of our neighbors - but our broken politics have gotten in the way. We think voters should get to decide.
- Signing your name just means that you think the people of Florida should get a vote on this important issue during the next election
- Past Governors and legislatures have failed to act and so far all signs point to the newly elected Florida officials taking the same position. This ballot initiative will give the people of Florida a say.

WHAT DOES "MEDICAID EXPANSION" MEAN ?

Medicaid provides health coverage to millions of Americans, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults and people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by states, according to federal requirements. The program is funded jointly by states and the federal government.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) allows states to expand Medicaid eligibility (the process is referred to as "Medicaid Expansion") to uninsured adults and children whose incomes are at or below 138% of the federal poverty level (FPL), including many who live with mental illness. For a family of 4 in 2019, the FPL is \$25,750 and %138 of the FPL is \$35,535.

Income limits to qualify for Medicaid in Florida vary by age and family make-up, children and adults qualifying separately.

Importantly, able-bodied, non-elderly adults who don't have dependents are not eligible for Medicaid in Florida, regardless of how low their income is.



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Florida's eligibility standards as of April 2018 are:

- Children up to 1 year old: 206 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL)
- Children ages 1-5: 140 percent of FPL
- Children ages 6-18: 133 percent of FPL
- Pregnant women: 191 percent of FPL
- Young adults, ages 19 and 20: 29 percent of FPL
- Adults with dependent children: 29 percent of FPL

Source: <https://www.healthinsurance.org/florida-medicaid/>

WHO WILL BE COVERED BY MEDICAID EXPANSION?

Many are working folks who make too much to qualify for Medicaid, but still cannot afford to buy health insurance. It has been estimated that over 700,000 currently uninsured people will be able to have health insurance because of Medicaid expansion.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

People who do not have healthcare tend to wait to seek treatment until they are very sick and then often go to emergency rooms. This hospital expense is then passed along to insurance companies when they contract for hospital services and ultimately causes higher insurance premiums for the rest of us! Health insurers have long known that preventive care is much less costly than emergency care.

The "working poor" are often living paycheck to paycheck. Becoming very ill due to a lack of affordable preventative healthcare and losing income can truly be a hardship. Staying healthy and productive is clearly better for both these folks and for their employers.



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WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR THIS?

Mostly, the Federal government. Starting in 2020 and beyond , the Federal government will pay 90% of the cost.

It has been estimated that since Medicaid Expansion was first possible, the state of Florida has WALKED AWAY FROM OVER \$50 BILLION that would have come from the Federal government to support the program.

And <https://www.healthinsurance.org/florida-medicaid/> estimates that \$65.2 BILLION WOULD BE LEFT ON THE TABLE over the next decade.

We are going to pay taxes to the Federal government, and the Federal government is going to distribute that money to states that expand medicaid, regardless of what Florida does. Shouldn't Florida get a piece of that pie?

There is evidence that states with Medicaid expansion have saved money and projections that Florida will save money too. See the following:

<https://www.fpi.institute/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MedicaidExpansionReport.pdf>

WHAT ARE OTHER STATES DOING ABOUT THIS?

As of November, 2018, 36 states + D.C. have adopted Medicaid expansion in one way or another. These INCLUDE states like: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Utah, and Virginia.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much will Medicaid expansion cost?

Recent studies show that Florida will actually save money by expanding Medicaid – it is mostly paid for by the federal government. But this is a great topic for the



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campaign to address once we qualify it for the ballot. Then we can each make up our own minds.

Isn't this a job for the Legislature?

It would be great if our legislature could put politics aside and address this issue thoughtfully. Right now they're pretty out of touch. Fortunately, Florida gives citizens the option to take issues like this directly to the people.

Who is behind this?

This is a volunteer-led effort by a lot of groups who care about healthy families in Florida. I'm here because I am part of the Democratic Club.