

**Washington, D.C.** – North Carolina Representatives David Price (NC-04), G.K. Butterfield (NC-01), and Mel Watt (NC-12) urged the North Carolina House of Representatives to reject Senate Bill 4, which would keep as many as 500,000 North Carolinians from gaining access to affordable, quality health care through the federally-funded expansion of Medicaid included in the Affordable Care Act. Blocking Medicaid expansion would increase costs for the State, increase premiums for those with insurance, and block the creation of thousands of new jobs.

Citing the economic, fiscal, and social benefits of Medicaid expansion, the members write:

"As members of North Carolina's Congressional delegation, we do not routinely express our views on legislation before the General Assembly. But the grave threat to our state's economy and quality of life posed by Senate Bill 4, as well as the direct conflict it creates with federal policy, compel us to do so. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject this costly and short-sighted measure. . .

"Rejecting Medicaid expansion would strike a devastating blow to working families in our state and to the North Carolina economy as a whole. Nearly 500,000 North Carolinians who are currently uninsured could gain access to affordable, quality health care through expansion, unless their state government stands in the way."

A recent study commissioned by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services found that the expansion of Medicaid could inject about \$1.4 billion into the North Carolina economy, creating as many as 23,000 jobs. The North Carolina Institute of Medicine estimates that Medicaid expansion will save North Carolina more than \$65 million over the next eight years. Republican governors in Arizona, Ohio, Michigan, New Mexico, and North Dakota have already decided to implement Medicaid expansion. The letter continues:

"One need not support the other major reforms included in the Affordable Care Act to agree that expanding Medicaid to able-bodied, low-income adults is a "win-win" for both the State of North Carolina and its residents. As you are well aware, under the terms of the law the federal government will cover 100 percent of the costs of expansion for the first three years and 90 percent of the costs thereafter...At a time of pressing fiscal challenges, there is no reason for our state's leaders to leave this money just sitting on the table."

Only about 30 percent of low-income adults are currently covered by Medicaid in North Carolina, leaving many families to rely solely on emergency care. This lack of basic preventive health care drives up health insurance costs for those covered in the private market through a "hidden tax" on premiums. The American Academy of Actuaries estimates that premiums for private insurance will be at least two percent higher in states that do not expand Medicaid, since many of those who would be eligible for the expansion will continue to rely disproportionately on emergency care instead.

[Click here for a copy of the full letter.](#)

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