



Virginia MIRC< vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov>

New MIRC Comment

1 message

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Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov

First Name - Rochelle**Last Name** - Jobses**Organization Name** -

Comment - Honorable Emmett W. Hanger, Jr., Chair Honorable R. Steven Landes, Vice-Chair Commission Members Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission 201 North 9th Street Richmond, VA 23219 October 17, 2013 Honorable Commission Members, Thank you very much for providing this opportunity for your constituents to comment on the Expansion of the Medicaid program in Virginia. I would like you to know that I fully support the Medicaid Expansion for the Commonwealth. I am a Registered Nurse in an academic medical center in Virginia, working in Hospital Epidemiology, Infection Prevention & Control. As such, I am one of a team who cares for the public health of those within our health system: patients, family members, visitors, employees, and independent practitioners. Being aware of and caring for the public health involves doing all that is possible to ensure conditions in which our people can be healthy. This is a very basic need that we are responsible to meet. Similarly, you as Commissioners must consider the ways in which the Expansion of Medicaid is crucial to the public health of all living in Virginia. To ensure healthy Virginians we must care about access to health care that is affordable and of high quality. The Affordable Care Act has set much in motion to address these needs, but aspects must be tailored for Virginia. There is a large group of hardworking Virginians who serve others in low-paying jobs essential to our way of life, who do not earn enough to support self, family, and be able to afford health insurance. There are approximately 400,000 such individuals in Virginia alone, according to Urban Institute figures. These are the people, our neighbors and workmates, who will be eligible for expanded Medicaid services in Virginia. In our safety-net Emergency Departments every day we see the costly result of not being able to afford health care: patients come in with advanced illnesses that could have been more effectively and efficiently treated had these individuals been seen preventively or earlier in the illness, as they would with Medicaid managed care. Evidence for this was documented by Virginia Commonwealth University in their 2012 article in Health Affairs (Bradley, Gandhi, Neumark, Garland, & Retchin). I agree that health care, including Medicare and Medicaid, is in need of reform, and there are specific recommendations that have been made in Virginia for this. But please, do not let these separate initiatives block the very important expansion of care for this vulnerable population in the meanwhile. There is also strong fiscal sense in participating in expanded Medicaid coverage. The ACA will provide less Federal funding for health systems in Virginia caring for the indigent and uninsured; this will be a loss to hospitals. A way to balance this will be to accept Federal funding to cover the difference in the cost of expanding Medicaid coverage so that fewer of our patients are indigent and uninsured. This will lead to an eventual savings that can be reinvested back into our communities in further public health initiatives that create a healthier citizenry and workforce. I thank you again for your time to thoughtfully study this public health issue. I look forward to the day that I learn that the Commission has recommended that Virginia participate in the Medicaid Expansion. Sincerely, Rochelle D. Jobses RN, BSN