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New MIRC Comment

1 message

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Comment -



Comments on Virginia Medicaid Expansion.pdf

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Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is a crucial first step in reducing our nation's healthcare expenditures, which at present represent almost 18% of our gross domestic product (GDP). Providing expanded Medicaid coverage and ensuring access to non-emergent, preventive, and ongoing health care with consistent health care providers in a coordinated "medical home" will address many of the existing disparities in access, improve health outcomes, decrease expenditures by reducing non-emergent care currently being rendered in hospital emergency departments, and will enable indigent persons and the working poor to seek preventive and maintenance care with a primary care provider. It is estimated that Medicaid expansion under the ACA will reduce by 75% the number of uninsured adults who are ALREADY LIVING BELOW 138% of the poverty level and who otherwise will not be able to take advantage of the other coverage provisions under the ACA due to the cost of such coverage.

Access to health care is perhaps the most critical step in addressing and controlling the complex problem of burgeoning healthcare costs in America. By providing increased Medicaid coverage, we will not only increase access for the working poor and indigent to health care in general, we will encourage the development of regular, lower-cost, proactive/preventive care, rather than the expensive and fragmented "after the fact" or reactive care currently sought out of desperation in an emergency room environment, which increases health care costs, overburdens the acute care system, and leads to poorer overall health outcomes.

The most visible sign of the need for health care reform is the 46 million Americans currently without health insurance. That the wealthiest developed nation on earth has 46 million people with no or limited access to health care, a basic life necessity, is a travesty of greatest magnitude. In the absence of reform, projections suggest that this number will rise to about 72 million in 2040.

We can begin to address this problem at its base, within our commonwealth, through expansion of Medicaid, which based on CBO projections, will represent only a 2.8% increase in what the commonwealth would have spent on Medicaid from 2014-2022, in the absence of the ACA. 2.8 %. Not to accept this funding and provide for this expansion is unconscionable and morally reprehensible.

Medicaid expansion will reduce state and local government costs for uncompensated care and other services provided to the uninsured, helping to offset the small increase in Medicaid spending that will result from the expansion.

A loss of health is a loss of opportunity. America has always been known as the land of opportunity. However, our ongoing failure to provide equitable access for all persons to health care insurance and primary care has diminished not only individual opportunity, but the collective futures of our commonwealth and nation.

This is a no-brainer if ever there was one. It is time for government leaders to step up, put political posturing aside, and ensure that the least among us has equitable access to health insurance and health care in an appropriate environment of care, over a lifetime. It is the right thing to do.