



Virginia MIRC <vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov>

New MIRC Comment

1 message

Wed, Oct 16, 2013 at 12:57 PM

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov

First Name - Miriam

Last Name - Bender

Organization Name -

Comment -



MIRC Medicaid expansion.pdf

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Dear MIRC Members,

I am writing to support the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia. The poorest segment of our population needs appropriate health care. That means all income-eligible people, not just the limited categories of people who are currently covered, and it means care that includes and preventive and routine care in the appropriate medical setting.

At the present time, the limitations on Medicaid to specified segments of the low-income population means that many poor people do not get preventive care or treatment when illnesses and other medical conditions first appear. Instead they may rely on emergency rooms for routine and non-emergency care or get care only when their conditions become acute and more complex and expensive to treat. Because they lack coverage, their care is uncompensated, thus imposing a “hidden” tax by increasing overall fees charged by their emergency providers and increasing insurance costs for others. These added costs both to the health of this segment of the population and to the medical system can be significantly reduced or avoided by including this population in Medicaid.

The design of the Affordable Care Act provided that those at the bottom of the economic ladder would have Medicaid and, as people could afford insurance, they would be able to purchase it. If Medicaid is not expanded, this medically needy population will stay uninsured, since they will be below the income level at which subsidies for insurance will apply.

Finally, since the cost of Medicaid expansion will be paid by the federal government in its entirety for 3 years and at 90% after that, it makes economic sense for the Commonwealth to take part in the program. One objection to expansion that I have heard is that the federal government might not be able to pay for the program. If that occurs, the program will need to be revised, Virginia would not be the only state affected, and this country will be facing bigger problems than just paying for Medicaid. Until that unlikely event happens, Virginia should accept the funds and expand Medicaid.

Sincerely,

Miriam A. Bender