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## New MIRC Comment

1 message

Tue, Oct 8, 2013 at 11:37 AM

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov

**First Name** - Debbie

**Last Name** - Brinkley

**Organization Name** -

**Comment** - As a lifelong Virginian and mental health advocate, I find it hard to believe we are seriously considering NOT expanding Medicaid. I am so hopeful this panel will present a solid case FOR expansion. - 6 out of 10 Americans living with serious mental illness currently have no access to mental health care. Medicaid is the most important source of financing for these services. Providing these services can prevent tragic and costly circumstances that result from lack of treatment. Grant these citizens access to treatment (just as would be allowed for a medical condition) before their symptoms get worse! Funding for this population continues to be awarded and taken away. Institutional beds continue to decline faster than community services can be adequately funded and staffed. Mentally ill Virginians deserve much better. - Consider the increase in federal dollars and the uncompensated care savings that would result from expansion. Account for the budget savings vs. expansion costs. Focus on the value of health insurance for the citizens of Virginia.