



Virginia MIRC <vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov>

New MIRC Comment

1 message

Reply-To: [REDACTED] We d, Oct 9, 2013 at 9:17 AM
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Organization Name - Salem Democratic Committee

Comment -

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On September 14th, I attended the annual Olde Salem Days arts and crafts festival in my hometown so that I could pass out information about Democratic gubernatorial candidate Terry McAuliffe. At the same time, his GOP opponent, Ken Cuccinelli was in Salem for a Republican breakfast. Afterward, Cuccinelli appeared on Main Street in order to glad hand with his supporters.

Even in the crowd of tens of thousands of Olde Salem Days patrons, it was inevitable that our paths would cross on the narrow streets of Salem. When I did come across Cuccinelli amongst the throngs of potential voters, I seized the opportunity to politely shake his hand and ask him if elected governor, would he be willing to expand Medicaid in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act. The attorney general told me no, he would not be likely to support the Medicaid expansion in Virginia before he continued on his way.

For those who might not remember, when the Supreme Court upheld Obamacare, the justices left the option to expand Medicaid up to the individual states. The federal government would cover 100 percent of the cost of expansion for three years, and no less than 90 percent of the cost after that.

McAuliffe has stated that he would be willing to accept the \$21 billion in federal funding over seven years to go along with the Medicaid expansion. McAuliffe has told voters that one of the reasons he believes it is foolish to refuse the federal funding is that it comes from our own federal tax dollars. Virginians have already contributed to the Medicaid fund through our payroll taxes, so why should our tax money go to other states?

On a personal note, I am a 7 ½ year survivor of a cancerous brain tumor. Because of my preexisting conditions, I currently have to pay \$483 per month in health insurance premiums. These premiums pay for a policy that carries a high deductible. That means I have to spend \$5,000 out of pocket before my insurance will contribute one cent for any of my health care needs. After my brain tumor and six and a half weeks of radiation therapy, I developed the sleep disorder known as narcolepsy. The out-of-pocket cost for a one-month refill of just one of my prescription medications comes to \$1,203.

Another reason I support the provision to expand the Medicaid program is my job as a full-time, in-home support professional for individuals with autism. My job is to encourage autistic individuals to achieve their personal goals and give them advice on how they can improve the quality of their own lives. I strive to help them become positive members of their communities. Because of their disabilities, my clients receive medical care benefits and services through Medicaid.

Beyond the fact that I want funding to be there for my clients and their families if they need it, the private company I work for receives reimbursement for my wages through Medicaid. The expansion under the Affordable Care Act could create over 30,000 jobs here in the commonwealth for health care workers to provide similar essential services

for people with disabilities and to care for low-income seniors and families in our communities.

While my job can be a rewarding experience, it does not pay well, and at this time, I do not get full health insurance benefits. Last year, I spent 59 percent of my gross income on health-related expenses, including premiums and copays. This year, I am looking at close to 55 percent of my income being required to cover my insurance premiums and to satisfy my high deductible.

In his role as attorney general, Cuccinelli has squandered our tax dollars fighting an unsuccessful war against Obamacare based on his own personal ideology. Along with his extremely dogmatic running mates, E.W. Jackson for Lieutenant Governor, and Mark Obenshain for Attorney General, Ken Cuccinelli has led the crusade to interfere with women's access to potentially life-saving preventative care across the state. They are the ones who are placing unnecessary government regulations between patients and their doctors.

I strongly encourage readers to vote for the good of our commonwealth and all Virginians on November 5. Join me and elect Terry McAuliffe as our Governor, Dr. Ralph Northam as Lieutenant Governor and Mark Herring as Attorney General. All three, including Dr. Northam in his capacity as a pediatric neurosurgeon, have spoken in favor of policies that will give all Virginians access life saving medical care at an affordable price.