



TO: Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission

FROM: N. Travis Clark
President, Valley Health-Page Memorial Hospital

DATE: September 25, 2013

Writing on behalf of Page Memorial Hospital and our medical staff, I want to express our full support of Medicaid expansion and encourage you to approve it without delay.

The health care needs in Page County are significant. 1,591 residents of Page County would qualify for Medicaid if expansion efforts are successful. This represents approximately 6.4% of the County's 25,000 residents.

Medicaid expansion through the use of Federal appropriations will have an economic impact of some \$10 million in Page County. With our unemployment rate at 8.3%, 40% higher than the state average, the residents of Page County would benefit from the resulting flow of these dollars through the economy. Refusing to support this program could result in a worsening jobs picture in Page County and across the Commonwealth.

Furthermore, our medical staff feels strongly that Medicaid expansion would enhance access to care and provide medical interventions sooner to our most vulnerable residents. As you know, many of the most dangerous diseases have early prolonged periods without symptoms. During such periods, access to care provides an invaluable opportunity for detection, prevention of complications, and possibly even reversal or cure. For example, the local deficit in access to care likely contributes significantly to our county's diabetes rate, which exceeds the national average by approximately 20%. Earlier treatment may lead to lower future costs of this expensive chronic disease and, most importantly, result in more productive lives for our citizens.

We support the expansion of Medicaid and we ask you to support it as well.