



For Immediate Release
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Supporters of Medicaid Expansion Overwhelm Hearing Room

In a committee hearing room that was standing room only, Rep. Jay Barnes, chairman of the House Committee on Government Oversight and Accountability, noted the overwhelming list of witnesses who wanted to speak in support of Medicaid Expansion, while only one observer raised his hand to testify against Rep. Jacob Hummel's bill in support of Medicaid expansion. Dozens of groups that are often in opposition to one another, including the AFL-CIO, the Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Missouri, The Missouri Hospital Association and others put aside their differences and joined together in support of the bill (House Bill 627). They joined together for different reasons: job creation; federal investment in the state; protection of rural hospitals; or the moral imperative to cover the one in seven Missourians who are currently uninsured. Despite the broad and deep support the bill, the committee rejected it 5-2.

Polling has consistently indicated strong support for Medicaid in Missouri. Study after study has shown the financial benefits that await the state if we agree to recapture Missouri tax dollars and put them to work insuring our neighbors. Twenty two other states, including seven led by Republican Governors who oppose the federal health care reform law, have agreed to expand Medicaid.

In his press conference last week Florida Governor Rick Scott stated "It shouldn't depend on your zip code or your tax bracket. No mother or father should despair over whether they have access to high-quality health care for their sick child. With federal funds covering the cost, I cannot in good conscience deny Floridians that needed access to health care." Ohio Governor John Kasich took it a step further. "I can't look at the disabled, I can't look at the poor, I can't look at the mentally ill, I can't look at the addicted and think we ought to ignore them. For those that live in the shadows of life, those who are the least among us, I will not accept the fact that the most vulnerable in our state should be ignored. We can help them."

Missourians would be lucky to be represented by public servants who can look past the political talking points of their party and into the faces on the people they were elected to serve. We can insure 260,000 of the currently hardworking Missourians who are being forced to live in the shadows of life. Expanding Medicaid will create jobs and save lives. It's a win win.

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