

Resolution of the Bonneville County Democratic Party to Support Medicaid Expansion

Whereas, one Idahoan is estimated to die a “death by poverty” each day because of lack of health care coverage, and countless others suffer irreversible health damage because of delayed care for medical conditions.

Whereas, Medicaid expansion will save lives. Medicaid results in improved health care outcomes, access to services, including behavioral health care, and financial stability for recipients, infant mortality reductions, increases in early cancer diagnoses, increases in opioid use disorder treatment, and improves ongoing care for chronic diseases, and mortality benefits that increase over time as a result of the “heroism of incremental care.”

Whereas, Medicaid expansion will save money—90% of the costs of Medicaid expansion will be covered by the federal government to total \$4.7 billion over 10 years. State medical costs would be reduced by replacing emergency room visits with incremental care. According to the state-commissioned July 2018 Milliman actuarial study, if the Idaho Catastrophic Health Care fund (known as the CAT fund) and county indigent funds were reduced or eliminated, combined with cost reductions in other state medical programs, the average savings could be as much as \$15 million per year in Idaho. The economic multiplier effect from factors such as more people employed in the health care industry, based on the figures in the Milliman report, is estimated to be another \$20 million a year for the Idaho economy.

Whereas, Medicaid stands out as far more efficient and cost effective than many other U.S. health care systems, spending only 3.3% of funds for administration.

Whereas, Medicaid expansion (1) is a fair, equitable way to extend health care to the working poor and disabled, (2) will provide coverage to the 62,000 low income Idahoans now in the gap with no options for health insurance because income must be more than 100% of the poverty level (an individual annual income of \$12,060) to qualify for the Idaho insurance exchange, and (3) also will cover people who make up to 135% of the poverty level, making an estimated 91,000 people in Idaho eligible for coverage with Medicaid expansion,

Whereas, Idaho chose not to expand Medicaid after the 2012 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that Medicaid expansion is optional for states, resulting in the health care coverage gap,

Whereas Idaho voters will choose on November 6, 2018, whether to approve the initiative for Medicaid expansion in Idaho,

Be it resolved, that the Bonneville County Democratic Party supports Medicaid expansion and the election of candidates to state office who support Medicaid expansion.

Approved by unanimous voice vote, August 21, 2018