THE COSTS OF NOT EXPANDING MEDICAID FOR GASTON COUNTY

To date, North Carolina has declined to join the majority of states in expanding Medicaid eligibility for low-income residents. North Carolina's income limits for Medicaid are among the lowest in the country (about $10,000 for a parent with two children; no coverage for childless adults). Almost one in five North Carolina adults under 65 remains uninsured.

Analyses by the Center for Health Policy Research at George Washington University indicate that not expanding Medicaid is already hindering job creation and economic growth for 2014 and 2015 because North Carolina is not capturing billions in federal matching dollars that would otherwise flow into the state economy to make expansions more affordable.

The analyses also examine the potential effects if the state continues to decline the opportunity to expand Medicaid in the coming legislative session, so that it could be implemented by 2016. If North Carolina does not expand Medicaid by 2016, $21 billion in federal matching funds will be lost between 2016 and 2020, stifling economic and employment growth.

In **Gaston County,** not expanding Medicaid by 2016 would lead to:

Jobs

481 fewer jobs created in 2016

973 fewer jobs created in 2020

Coverage

6,823 people who would not get Medicaid in 2016

Economic Growth & Revenue

$296.1 million less growth to the county's economy from 2016 to 2020

$460.1 million less in county business activity from 2016 to 2020

$4.0 million less collected in county tax revenues from 2016 to 2020

(All data are compared to levels attained if Medicaid expands)

Expansion of Medicaid will not only help more people get access to affordable health care, it can serve as an engine of economic development and job creation.

Statewide, about half the jobs not created would be in health care (such as hospitals or clinics); almost half would be in other sectors, such as construction or retail and wholesale trade. This ripple effect occurs because Medicaid funding received by hospitals, clinics or drug stores is used to pay workers' salaries and to buy other goods and services. The economic benefits multiply as these funds are, in turn, used to pay for mortgages or rent, buy food and pay state and county taxes.

For more information, see the full report at: ***www.NCMedicaidExpansion.com***

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