**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE HONORABLE HENRY DARGAN MCMASTER ON ASSUMING THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA AND TO ENCOURAGE GOVERNOR MCMASTER TO EXPAND MEDICAID TO PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF OTHERWISE UNINSURED LOW‑INCOME SOUTH CAROLINIANS AND TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF THE STATE’S ECONOMY AND JOB SECURITY FOR RESIDENTS OF THE PALMETTO STATE.

Whereas, the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act provided for “Medicaid expansion” through which states were to expand coverage of Medicaid to include certain low‑income adults not otherwise eligible for Medicaid; and

Whereas, under the expansion, an individual age sixty‑five years or younger whose income is at or below one hundred thirty‑eight percent of the federal poverty level would be entitled to health insurance coverage through Medicaid. The federal government, which funded the costs of expansion one hundred percent from 2014 through 2016, will continue to fund the expansion but will gradually reduce its share to ninety percent, beginning in 2020; and

Whereas, the 2017 federal poverty level is $11,880 for one person. As a result, an individual age sixty‑five years or younger earning $16,394 or less would qualify for Medicaid coverage if the State expanded the program as allowed by federal law; and

Whereas, anywhere from one hundred sixty thousand to two hundred fifty thousand South Carolinians would benefit from Medicaid expansion. Without it, hundreds of thousands of residents of this State have no access to health insurance and consequently no access to basic health care services; and

Whereas, without health insurance, these individuals will forego routine procedures, such as mammograms, cervical cancer screenings, colorectal exams, and prostate exams, all of which are effective in detecting deadly illnesses early enough to save lives. They also will skip medication regimens resulting in manifestation and worsening of preventable or chronic health conditions, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes; and

Whereas, the decision whether to expand Medicaid will have significant financial ramifications in terms of the health care provider and payor systems which will impact the quality of health care provided to this vulnerable population; and

Whereas, in states which have chosen to expand Medicaid and, thus, accept millions of dollars in federal funding used to provide Medicaid services, individuals are more likely to be insured and to have access to a primary health care provider, avoiding the need to seek emergency care in a hospital, and those who must use emergency care are more likely to be insured. All of this provides resources to hospitals and benefits the health of these individuals; and

Whereas, in states which have chosen not to expand Medicaid, health care providers face increased costs because uninsured individuals are generally less healthy than individuals who have a regular primary care provider. Consequently, these individuals must utilize more expensive hospital emergency care, while hospitals are faced with fewer available payor resources when treating uninsured patients; and

Whereas, a study published in *Health Affairs* found states that had expanded Medicaid in 2014, including Minnesota, Kentucky and Arizona, saw a dramatic decrease in uninsured hospital stays and a significant increase in Medicaid stays. In states that did not expand, there were no significant changes in payor mix; and

Whereas, according to the South Carolina Hospital Association, the decision of the State not to expand Medicaid prevented South Carolina from reclaiming more than four billion dollars in 2014, 2015, and 2016, alone, and will prevent the State from reclaiming nearly twelve billion federal dollars available for expansion between 2014 through 2020; and

Whereas, Medicaid expansion also will result in significant job growth. According to a 2012 study by the University of South Carolina’s Moore School of Business, forty‑four thousand new jobs would be created by 2020 were the State to expand Medicaid. This would translate into the ability for more people to have greater savings and disposable income, which would benefit the economies of large and small communities throughout the State; and

Whereas, among other organizations, AARP South Carolina, the South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce, the South Carolina Christian Action Council, the American Heart Association, the South Carolina Cancer Alliance, Palmetto Health, Lexington Medical Center, Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc., the Columbia Urban League, Inc., the March of Dimes, the National Alliance for Mental Illness South Carolina, and the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association support expansion of Medicaid as in the best interest of the State; and

Whereas, thirty‑one states and the District of Columbia, have embraced Medicaid expansion, recognizing the benefits to the health of its residents as well as to the health of its economy and job markets, and the governor of North Carolina has presented a plan and is taking steps to expand Medicaid; and

Whereas, the federal government has demonstrated a willingness to fund alternative expansion models, including the Arkansas model, which uses Medicaid dollars to subsidize private insurance for recipients; and

Whereas, by executive action, the State is able to expand Medicaid at any time and embrace the benefits of the program. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, congratulate the Honorable Henry Dargan McMaster on assuming the Office of Governor of the State of South Carolina and encourage Governor McMaster to expand Medicaid to provide health insurance to hundreds of thousands of otherwise uninsured low‑income South Carolinians and to promote the health of the state’s economy and job security for residents of the Palmetto State.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Honorable Henry Dargan McMaster.

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