



OHIO'S JOBS BUDGET 2.0

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State of the State Reactions on the Governor's Plan for Medicaid

Mike Abrams, President and CEO of the Ohio Hospital Association: “Today, the cost of providing health care for Ohio’s uninsured citizens is being borne by nearly 10 million other Ohioans, employers and Ohio hospitals. OHA commends Gov. Kasich on this bold decision to bring responsible expansion to a vital program that safeguards Ohio taxpayers while extending basic health care coverage to many of Ohio’s working poor. If legislators remove this opportunity from the budget, they will be endangering access to vital health care for their constituents.

“Thanks to Governor Kasich’s leadership in extending Medicaid eligibility to the working poor, hospital uncompensated care costs will begin to subside, which in turn will help reduce health care costs overall.”

Michael Fisher, Chairman of the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association Board of Directors and President and CEO of Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center: “The members of the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association are pleased that Governor Kasich outlined the case for Medicaid expansion in his State of the State address, as we support Medicaid expansion in Ohio. Although Ohio children are currently eligible for Medicaid up to 200% of FPL, the health of the entire family is important to the long-term economic vitality of our state. We recognize the potential benefit of providing more Ohio adults with Medicaid health coverage as outlined by Governor Kasich this evening. Obviously, expansion cannot come at the expense of care for Ohio’s youngest patients or those health care providers who provide them cost effective, high quality care – including the 1.2 million children in Ohio who already rely on Medicaid for health care coverage.

“We are confident Ohio’s world class pediatric health care system will continue to receive strong assistance and support from Ohio’s policy makers recognizing the unique role we play in Ohio’s health delivery system. We are looking forward to continuing to work with Governor Kasich, Ohio Office of Health Transformation Director Greg Moody, Ohio Medicaid Director John McCarthy and all members of the Ohio House of Representatives and Ohio Senate on HB 59, and, in particular, the provisions impacting the health care of Ohio’s children.”

Larry Long, Executive Director of the County Commissioners Association: “After reviewing the likely effects of a [Medicaid] expansion, it seems there are many winners. Between the positive impacts to the economy, the ability to get more people into preventative care rather than emergency room care, and providing a much needed boost to our behavioral health system, expansion seems like the common sense thing to do.”

Dr. Steven G. Gabbe, CEO of Ohio State University’s Wexner Medical Center: “Gov. John Kasich again showed his leadership and compassion for Ohio’s most vulnerable citizens. During his State of the State address tonight, the governor courageously proposed a responsible extension of the state’s Medicaid program. Through this expansion of basic health care coverage, this plan will help create healthier Ohio families. It will also strengthen our state’s economy.

“Medicaid extension is supported by some of our state’s largest business associations. They, too, understand that healthier Ohioans are essential to our state’s overall economic competitiveness.”

Terry Russell, Executive Director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio: “For years NAMI Ohio has been trying to get decision makers to hear our pleas on behalf of those whose lives have been invaded by mental illness to little avail. Until recently, people in a position to make change took little notice of the horrifying statistic that individuals with mental illness die 25 years earlier than the rest of the population. They are not dying early because of their mental illness, but due to neglect of the many healthcare issues they face. Governor Kasich has heard our plea and tonight, in his State of the State address he answered our prayers by standing firm in his desire to expand Medicaid. Not only was this a courageous political decision on the part of the Governor, it was the right thing to do because it will save lives. NAMI Ohio hopes that the members of the General Assembly will show equal compassion for individuals struggling with this terrible illness by supporting the Governor’s proposal to expand Medicaid.”

Mike Schoenhofer, Executive Director of the Allen, Auglaize & Hardin Counties Mental Health and Recovery Services Board and President of the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA): “Tonight Governor Kasich once again showed his commitment to helping Ohioans in need. In his biennial budget he took another courageous and bold step in helping some of Ohio’s most vulnerable citizens by proposing the expansion of Medicaid to 138% of poverty. We completely support this expansion, as this will provide for the single largest investment in the alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health systems in a great many years.”

Cheri L. Walter, CEO of OACBHA: “Expanding Medicaid, and improving the safety net for individuals in need of alcohol, drug addiction and/or mental health services is so important to our members that they unanimously passed a resolution calling on the Ohio General Assembly to pass the Expansion of Medicaid to 138% of poverty as allowable by the Affordable Care act”.

Randy Runyon, President and CEO of the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC): “Tonight Governor Kasich demonstrated a clear vision for Ohio’s future and compassion for our most vulnerable citizens in his State of the State Address. The responsible extension of Medicaid supports our state’s fiscal health while at the same time extends health coverage for many of Ohio’s working poor. This is a win-win – keeping Ohioans as healthy as possible and managing chronic conditions when they do present, all while increasing patient outcomes, supporting a healthier workforce, and lowering overall health system costs.”

Donna Conley, Executive Director of the Ohio Citizen Advocates for Chemical Dependency Prevention & Treatment: “Governor Kasich again put forth a strong case tonight in his State of the State address that an extension of Medicaid is both a good business decision and the right thing to do for Ohio’s vulnerable low-income citizens. Ohio Citizen Advocates applauds his foresight in recognizing that Ohio’s economic competitiveness depends on the health of our entire workforce.”

Gayle Channing Tenenbaum, Co-Chair of Advocates for Ohio’s Future: “Tonight Gov. John Kasich again showed he cares about strengthening families and communities in Ohio. The Governor has courageously proposed to extend health coverage to 275,000 while safeguarding Ohio taxpayers. Medicaid extension will boost to Ohio’s economy by making Ohioans healthier—healthy citizens build strong communities, and healthy workers strengthen Ohio’s economy.

“Two years ago, state government began transforming Medicaid in Ohio. We are encouraged by movement in this state budget to prioritize home and community based services, rebuild the community behavioral health system capacity, and enhance community developmental disabilities services.”

Mark Davis, Co-Chair of Advocates for Ohio’s Future: “Advocates for Ohio’s Future strongly urges the Ohio House to extend health coverage to low income workers and their families. If Ohio chooses not to extend Medicaid, Ohio taxpayers will pay an additional \$404 million over the next two years and lose \$2.4 billion in Ohioans’ federal tax dollars that would come into Ohio (\$13 billion over seven years). We can’t afford not to extend Medicaid in the state budget.

“Ohio’s economy is stronger when everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in our economy. Yet, 400,000 Ohioans are looking for work and employers report difficulty finding qualified applicants for open positions. The Jobs 2.0 Budget focuses on jobs, but Ohio can do more to create good jobs and career opportunities for all Ohioans. If people can’t maintain what economists call “Basic Spending” levels – on things like food, rent, health care, and transportation – then the entire economy suffers. By investing in public services that make Ohio’s workforce more competitive, we can strengthen our economy.”

Sandy Oxley, Chief Advocacy Officer and Interim CEO of Voices for Ohio’s Children: “It is clear that the state is moving in the right direction and the extension of Medicaid plays a key part in our economic recovery.

“Gov. Kasich is to be commended for standing for a healthier Ohio in the face of great political pressure. Thanks to Governor Kasich’s courageous decision to accept federal funds and pursue Medicaid extension will provide a stable source of coverage to improve access for low income workers and ultimately strengthen families. Voices will continue to advocate and encourage support of the extension in the legislature.”

Virginia O’Keeffe, CEO of Amethyst, Inc. and Co-Chair of Ohio Women’s Network (OWN): “The Ohio Women’s Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Programs (OWN) applauds the transformational leadership exhibited by Governor Kasich by his decision to expand Medicaid in his budget for people up to 138% of poverty. The long term cost benefit realized by earlier intervention and treatment on the lives of those who will be eligible for alcohol and other drug treatment services will be staggering. We will have a greater opportunity to break the cycle of addiction, poverty and violence in the lives of women and families. We will also continue to advocate for the additional recovery supports that will lead to life-long recovery.”

Miranda Motter, President and CEO of the Ohio Association of Health Plans (OAHP): “The Ohio Association of Health Plans commends Governor John Kasich once again for his political courage in taking on a difficult issue - Medicaid expansion - that would provide immediate benefit to 275,000 Ohioans currently living without health insurance.

“OAHP member plans support Medicaid expansion. Expansion will greatly improve health care outcomes for many thousands of our fellow citizens, while also keeping Ohio’s tax dollars in Ohio and strengthening our economy. In addition, it will reduce the number of uninsured Ohioans seeking care at emergency rooms, shifting them to primary care providers for preventive care and treatment.

“Some critics of expansion believe the Medicaid program is ‘broken’ and lacking in cost containment strategies. However, the Governor’s Office of Health Transformation has greatly strengthened Ohio’s Medicaid program over the

last two years. And the OAHF plans that provide Medicaid managed care coverage have experienced tangible improvements in health care delivery, cost controls and health outcomes.

"OAHF members offer unparalleled institutional knowledge and health care management skills that can help the state expand Medicaid coverage and control costs. We look forward to working with the Governor, the General Assembly and all other stakeholders to ensure the continued success and historic transformation of Ohio's health care system."

Pamela Morris, President and CEO of CareSource: "Governor John Kasich's compassion for Ohio's most vulnerable citizens is to be applauded. The Governor has courageously proposed a responsible extension of the Medicaid program in a way that safeguards Ohio taxpayers while extending basic health care coverage to many of Ohio's working poor. CareSource applauds Governor Kasich's proposal to extend Medicaid in Ohio. This is the right choice for the people and businesses in Ohio. The extension of Medicaid is supported by some of Ohio's largest business associations because they understand that healthier Ohioans are an essential part of our overall economic competitiveness. Again this evening Governor Kasich demonstrated his commitment to transforming health care in our State."

Ari Lipman, Lead Organizer of Greater Cleveland Congregations and Chair of the Northeast Ohio Medicaid Expansion Coalition: "Governor Kasich devoted part of his State of the State message to the question of Medicaid expansion in Ohio. We commend the Governor for his steadfast support of expansion, doing what is right for the State of Ohio regardless of political pressure. Expansion would immediately address the serious health needs of 275,000 Ohioans and offer relief for the costs we all pay to cover uncompensated care in Ohio. No other plan is on the table for how to address the serious challenges that we are facing in health care. Federal payments for uncompensated care will sharply decrease. Rural hospitals will be hit especially hard. Medicaid expansion is right for Ohio and we sincerely hope legislators will continue to listen to the broad spectrum of voices, from business leaders to clergy to physicians and health advocates, who support extending Medicaid."

Col Owens and Cathy Levine, Co-Chairs of Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage (OCHC): "We thank Governor Kasich for showing compassion for Ohio's most vulnerable by proposing to extend health coverage to many of Ohio's working poor families. We appreciate the Governor's thoughtful approach and analysis and his courage to face critics."

Dr. Ed Hills, Interim CEO/President for MetroHealth System: "The MetroHealth System commends Governor John Kasich for continuing his efforts to transform healthcare in Ohio by including proposals to simplify Medicaid eligibility and to eliminate the Medicaid coverage gap in his state budget proposal, and we urge the Ohio General Assembly to back this continued transformation.

"Expanding Medicaid will make Ohioans healthier and lessen hardship and suffering; it will generate significant economic activity and create good paying jobs, reduce uncompensated care, and ultimately strengthen Ohio. We urge approval of this important initiative."

Bill Faith, Executive Director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO): "The governor made a smart, compassionate and gutsy decision to include Medicaid Expansion in his budget.

"It's smart because *not* providing coverage means a less reliable, less healthy and less productive work force. It's compassionate because *not* doing it continues to ignore the needs of some of our most vulnerable citizens. And it's gutsy because *not* doing it plays right into the partisan bickering that has gridlocked our country."

Jane Taylor, State Director for AARP Ohio: “Tonight Gov. John Kasich made it clear that he wants to ensure that Medicaid coverage is extended to our working poor in a way that safeguards Ohio taxpayers while providing basic health care coverage to people who have paid in all their lives but are struggling in today’s tough economic climate.

“Tens of thousands of Ohio have been laid off or work at low-wage jobs that don’t include health insurance. We need the safety net that Medicaid offers when things happen that are out of people’s control. Expanding Medicaid will help those, especially 50- to 64-year-olds, who lost jobs and can’t find new ones, but who don’t qualify for Medicaid because they don’t have young children at home.

“Right now, an adult making \$15,000 a year doesn’t qualify for Medicaid if they don’t have young children. It is unfair to deny a 60-year-old who has lost their job and is living in poverty access to basic health care just because they don’t have a child in their house. Studies show that expanding Medicaid results in fewer unnecessary deaths because low-income people get preventive care and life-saving drugs. Extending Medicaid to our working poor will make the program simple and fair – saving lives and strengthening our work force.

“AARP Ohio, with 1.5 million members statewide, is committed to standing in support of issues that matter to Ohioans age 50+ and their families. We urge the Ohio General Assembly to follow the governor’s lead and extend Medicaid to cover the working poor and give low-income midlife Ohioans access to potentially lifesaving prescription medications, preventive care and screenings.”

Molina Healthcare: “Tonight, Molina Healthcare applauds Governor Kasich for reaffirming his intention to expand Medicaid in Ohio. For over 30 years, Molina has focused exclusively on serving patients who qualify for government-sponsored health care, and we are preparing for the influx of new Medicaid members in 2014 so that the transition will be smooth for the new beneficiaries, our provider network and our state partners. We will continue to leverage our experience serving the Medicaid population in Ohio to implement best practices, offering the highest quality care to our members in a cost-effective manner.”

Hubert Wirtz, CEO of The Ohio Council of Behavioral and Family Services Providers: “Medicaid extension creates the single largest investment in mental health and addiction treatment services in more than two decades. This investment is a welcome down payment that benefits thousands of families and gives people, communities and Ohio the tools to succeed.”

Peter Van Runkle, Executive Director of the Ohio Health Care Association: “We support the extension because it helps our members and other long-term care providers in the state in ways that may not be apparent on the surface. It helps with one of the biggest issues our members face in the next year, which is the mandate under Obamacare that they offer health insurance to their employees or pay penalties.”

Steve White, President of Buckeye Community Health Plan: “Medicaid expansion is a positive concept for the state. There are many Ohioans who stand to benefit from an expansion of the Medicaid program and the Governor’s attention to the extension of the program is commendable since it addresses the healthcare needs of the working poor and the jobless in the state. An expansion of Medicaid should also result in a more efficient system, with less time spent on bad debts, less visits to emergency rooms and ultimately result in more time spent on providing quality health care to those who need it.”

Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Columbus Affiliate: “Early detection is the best tool we have in the battle against breast cancer. This is why the Columbus Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure supports Governor Kasich’s plan to expand Ohio’s Medicaid program.”

Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Northeast Ohio Affiliate: “The best tool we have in the fight against breast cancer is early detection. When breast cancer is detected early, before it spreads beyond the breast, the 5-year survival rate is 98 percent. Once the cancer spreads to other parts of the body, survival rates plummet to 23 percent. This is why the Northeast Ohio Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure supports Governor Kasich’s plan to expand Ohio’s Medicaid program.”