



Republican Governors Deciding Against the “Just Say No” Response to Medicaid Expansion

Prepared By: Leonardo Cuello
Date: February 25, 2013

Although “Obamacare” may have divided the parties, there is strong *bipartisan* support for new Medicaid funding in states. Republican Governors realize that Medicaid Expansion is a smart financial choice for their states. Here are some statements from Republican Governors who have decided to support federal funds for their state.

Florida Governor Rick Scott, Republican

“While the federal government is committed to paying 100 percent of the cost of new people in Medicaid, I cannot, in good conscience, deny the uninsured access to care. We will support a three-year expansion of our Medicaid program under the new healthcare law, as long as the federal government meets their commitment to pay 100 percent of the cost during this time... Our options are either having Floridians pay to fund this program in other states while denying healthcare to our citizens or using federal funding to help some of the poorest in our state with the Medicaid program as we explore other healthcare reforms... I am committed to working every day to improve access to affordable, high-quality healthcare in Florida, while also protecting taxpayers and keeping our economy growing to create more jobs – which ultimately fuels the dreams of every Florida family.”

Ohio Governor John R. Kasich, Republican

“[W]e should not shoot ourselves in the foot... We have unprecedented opportunity to bring 13 billion of Ohio's tax dollars back to Ohio to solve our problem. Our money coming home to fix our problems. It's a unique opportunity... And this money can provide health coverage for the poor, a great number of them who are working poor individuals who make less than \$15,415. They can't afford health care... You know where they get their healthcare now? They get it in an emergency room. Try going getting primary care health care in an emergency room. First of all, it's not efficient... It costs everybody more money when they do that because the emergency room's the highest cost operation you can get for health care. And it's not fair for them because they don't get healthier, so they're sicker and we pay for that as well... Furthermore, the federal government's going to end this aid to hospitals that serve the uninsured right now. The federal government's going to phase this out. You know what this is going to do to rural hospitals? Do you know what this is going to do to urban hospitals if we turn this down?”

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, Republican

“Arizona citizens have voted TWICE to expand Medicaid coverage. With this move [expanding Medicaid], we will secure a federal revenue stream to cover the costs of the uninsured who already show up in our doctor’s offices and emergency rooms. Under the current system, these costs are passed along to Arizona families. Health care premiums are raised year after year to account for expenses incurred by our hospitals as they provide care to the uninsured. This amounts to a HIDDEN TAX estimated at nearly 2 Thousand dollars per family, per year.”

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder, Republican

“Too many Michiganders don't have health insurance. And when they get sick, they either have nowhere to go or they wind up in the emergency room with no way to pay -- costing our citizens and state millions of dollars, while bringing down the quality of care for everyone. In short, it's a dumb way of doing business, and we can do better... 320,000 Michiganders will be covered in the first year... 470,000 will be covered by 2021... It's all about saving money by being smarter... By expanding Medicaid, people will have access to primary care doctors, saving Michigan hospitals those uncompensated care costs... By expanding Medicaid, we can provide an affordable option that will help businesses stay open while offering employees affordable health care... Not only are we saving money, but we're helping to improve the health of all Michiganders.”

Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval, Republican

“As a result [of expanding Medicaid], some 78,000 more Nevadans will now have coverage... The federal law allows us to shift mental health and other state spending to Medicaid sources, saving the General Fund nearly 25 million dollars over the biennium. Over the next 6 years, this comprehensive approach will create up to 8,000 new health care jobs and inject over half a billion dollars into our state’s economy.”

New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez, Republican

“[L]ast week, I announced we will expand Medicaid to cover up to 170,000 more low-income New Mexicans. It was the right thing to do. It means expanding the health care safety net to more of those in need and moving care from costly emergency rooms into primary care offices. And, it does not jeopardize the state’s long-term budget outlook. In fact, given our unique population and programs, we can expect revenue increases that offset the cost of providing these services.”