



February 8, 2022

Dear Speaker Gunn,

Mississippians value family, hard work, and personal responsibility. We take care of ourselves, our families, and each other—no matter the cost. We know that when we protect each other, our communities and our economy are stronger.

However, Mississippi's poor healthcare coverage has put our neighbors at risk and weakened our economy. More than 100,000 Mississippians are self-employed or work in jobs that don't provide health insurance and have no access to regular health care. Some of these residents hold multiple part-time jobs, but they still can't afford healthcare coverage. No one should have to choose between paying for health care and paying for rent or groceries.

Medicaid keeps rural hospitals open, creates job opportunities and helps our state become healthier and more prosperous. The Mississippi Hospital Association, faith and business leaders, health care providers, and many Mississippians support extending Medicaid to people who can't afford health insurance.

We are one of only 12 states that hasn't expanded the Medicaid health insurance program.

A common concern regarding Medicaid expansion is that we can't afford it. The Mississippi state economist's recent report refutes that claim. In fact, the report shows that state savings from Medicaid expansion will offset the costs to the state in at least the first ten years of expansion.

Expanding healthcare access isn't just good for the health of our residents, it's also good for the economy. Expansion will create jobs and increase the state's GDP each year. That increase will in turn add about \$44 Million per year to the state general fund revenue.

If we don't expand Medicaid now, we hurt working people across the state and we leave money on the table. The federal government will cover 90% of the expansion costs and will bring an additional \$600 million to Mississippi—money that would otherwise go to other states. It's time to bring Mississippi tax dollars back home to take care of our own.

Fixing our health care system is something everyone can agree on. It's time for our Legislature to create a Mississippi-based solution to the healthcare coverage crisis in our state.

Care4Mississippi and the undersigned Mississippians strongly urge you to support legislation that will increase healthcare access and make Mississippi healthier and more prosperous:

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