

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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In six full-page newspaper ads spanning the state, sixty Georgia groups call for Medicaid expansion

Under the American Rescue Plan, Georgia could attract \$1.3 Billion in new federal Medicaid funds over two years, covering the costs of Medicaid expansion and saving \$710 million that could be put towards other state priorities

Atlanta, Georgia – Full page ads calling for Medicaid expansion in Georgia will run in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution on Thursday, March 25th, and today, March 24th, in the Augusta Chronicle, Barrow News Journal, Marietta Daily Journal, Northeast Georgian (Habersham Co.), and Vidalia Advance. The ads have been placed by Cover Georgia, a coalition of consumer, patient, health care provider, small business, and civic groups, which aims to create a pathway of health coverage for all Georgians.

The recently passed American Rescue Plan gives states who have not yet extended health coverage to low-income adults an additional incentive to do so. If Georgia allows adults with incomes of less than 138% of the federal poverty line (\$17,775 for an individual and \$36,570 for a family of four) to enroll in Medicaid coverage, the federal government will add 5% to the state's Medicaid funding formula for a two-year period. The funding increase would add up to \$1.3 Billion, which would more than cover the costs of coverage expansion and give Georgia an additional \$710 million in savings which could be put towards other state spending.

"The time is right for the state of Georgia to accept the unique opportunity that is now available. The state will benefit fiscally by accepting this offer by the federal government to pay almost all of the costs of extending coverage to more Georgians," said Dr Clyde Watkins, Chairman of the Health & Public Policy Committee at the American College of Physicians, Georgia chapter. "Providing coverage to more Georgians will help the "safety net" of physicians, hospitals, and academic medical centers better serve their low-income patients and reduce cost-shifting to the rest of Georgians. Increasing access to care with coverage will strengthen rural health care in Georgia and improve the health of Georgians."

"The opportunity to expand coverage to low-income, uninsured Georgians was already a good deal for our state, and the new incentive makes it too good a deal to pass up," said Laura Colbert, Executive Director of Georgians for a Healthy Future. "Half a million Georgians would gain coverage and the extra funding could be used to accelerate our state's recovery from COVID-19. We have the rare opportunity to emerge from a public health crisis healthier and stronger than before. Georgia should absolutely take advantage of this one-time deal."

"The Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals supports this measure in order to rebuild the strength of our institutions," said Monty Veazey, President/CEO of the Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals. "The COVID-19 pandemic has placed a greater burden than ever on our health care delivery system, and on Georgia's working families. Two rural hospitals have closed in the last year and many more in all parts of Georgia have been brought to the brink of collapse. Nothing could more effectively support rural hospitals and the communities they serve medically and for which they provide an economic engine."

"Expanding Medicaid would greatly help small business owners, solo entrepreneurs and small business employees across the state who are struggling to access and afford health coverage," said Rachel Shanklin, Georgia Outreach Manager for Small Business Majority. "And small business owners strongly support this proposal: A [recent survey](#) found 6 in 10 Georgia small businesses support expanding eligibility for the state's Medicaid program. Expanding Georgia's Medicaid program will lower costs for small businesses and their employees, which is critical for businesses as they recover from the economic effects of the pandemic and put employees back to work."

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

500,000+ GEORGIA LIVES



**With new federal incentives,
Georgia can provide health coverage to
10 times more citizens
than under the state's current plan
at a fraction of the cost!**

**Save lives.
Save the health care safety net.
Save rural economies. NOW!**

CoverGA.org/GoodDeal

9 to 5, Atlanta	Feminist Women's Health Center	Indivisible Georgia Coalition
Advocates for Responsible Care	Georgia Academy of Family Physicians	Interfaith Children's Movement
Allergy & Asthma Network	Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals	Jewish Community Relations Council of Atlanta
American Association of University Women (AAUW), Georgia Chapter	Georgia Budget & Policy Institute	League of Women Voters, Georgia
American Cancer Society, Georgia	Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities	Mental Health America of Georgia
American College of Physicians, Georgia chapter	Georgia Council on Substance Abuse	Mercy Care
American Diabetes Assoc., Georgia	Georgia Equality	National Domestic Workers Alliance, Atlanta chapter
American Heart Association, Georgia	Georgia Organics	National Multiple Sclerosis Society
American Lung Association, Georgia	Georgia Interfaith Public Policy Center	Physicians for a National Health Program, GA Chapter
Anti-Defamation League (Tzedek Georgia)	Georgia Rural Urban Summit	Planned Parenthood Southeast
Athens for Everyone	Georgia Society for Public Health Education	Presbyterians for a Better Georgia
Atlanta Community Food Bank	Georgia Supportive Housing Association	ProGeorgia
Atlanta Jobs with Justice	Georgia Watch	Racial Justice Action Center
Center for Black Women's Wellness	Georgia WAND	Rx in Reach GA Coalition
Central Outreach & Advocacy Center	Georgians for a Healthy Future	Southwest Georgia Project
Coalition for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses	Healthcare-NOW! Georgia	Small Business Majority
Coalition for the People's Agenda		SPARK RJ
		Step Up Savannah

Background on Medicaid expansion:

Georgia is one of only 12 states that have not yet extended health insurance coverage to adult residents with incomes of less than 138% of the federal poverty line. An estimated 480,000-600,000 Georgians would be eligible for coverage under Medicaid expansion.

The federal government would pay at least 90% of the costs of the program in perpetuity and the state would cover the remaining 10% share. Georgia's estimated annual share of costs would be \$275 million.

By contrast, the [Governor's Pathways waiver](#) is estimated to cover 269,000 Georgians and cost as much as \$651 million annually.

About Cover Georgia: Cover Georgia is a broad coalition of community stakeholders and advocates from all across our state. We are working together to create a pathway of health coverage for ALL Georgians. Learn more at coverGA.org.

About the American College of Physicians, Georgia chapter: The American College of Physicians (ACP) Georgia Chapter represents over 3,600 internal medicine physicians and medical student members who live, study, teach and practice in the state of Georgia. Internal Medicine physicians provide care for many of Georgia's low-income uninsured parents and working adults. For more information, visit gaacp.org.

About the Georgia Alliance for Community Hospitals: The Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals is dedicated to furthering the ability of community hospitals to fulfill their primary mission of serving their communities. To this end, the Alliance will be a resource to members and a leader in advocating for sound health care policies and regulations. For more information, visit gach.org.

About Georgians for a Healthy Future: With a mission to build and mobilize a unified voice, vision, and leadership to achieve a healthy future for all Georgians, Georgians for a Healthy Future provides a strong, nonpartisan voice for Georgia consumers and communities on the health care issues and decisions that impact their lives. Georgians for a Healthy Future has a three-pronged approach which includes: 1) outreach, education, and engagement with consumers and communities; 2) coalition building and mobilization; 3) strategic communications; and 4) public policy advocacy. For more information, visit healthyfuturega.org.

About Small Business Majority: Small Business Majority is a national small business organization that empowers America's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. SBM engages a network of more than 80,000 small businesses and 1,000 business and community organizations to advocate for public policy solutions and deliver resources to entrepreneurs that promote equitable small business growth. SBM's deep connections with the small business community and scientific research enable the organization to educate the public about key issues impacting America's entrepreneurs, with a special focus on advancing the smallest businesses and those facing systemic inequalities. For more information, visit smallbusinessmajority.org.

