

Cover Georgia

Letters to the Editor

Updated: April 9, 2021

WHY SHOULD I WRITE AN LTE?

- Raise public awareness and education around the federal incentives for Georgia to expand Medicaid
- Communicate to your elected officials that Medicaid expansion is critical to the health and well-being of those they serve
- Highlight a unique perspective on the importance of Medicaid expansion
- Build public pressure and/or political cover for your elected officials to take advantage of the new federal incentives

WHERE SHOULD I PITCH MY LTE?

You can use Georgians for a Healthy Future's LTE submission form to easily send a letter to your local newspaper.

Every newspaper has different submission policies. Most have online forms or dedicated email accounts, and all have word limits. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution's LTE word limit is 150 words. LTEs are short, so the samples below are drafted at 150-200 words. These samples are meant to help you draft an effective letter to the editor. All the language is appropriate for nonpartisan use and for 501c3 organizations.

We encourage you to tailor the LTE templates to your community and yourself. You may find the [Fast Facts](#) and [Good Deal](#) pages at CoverGa.org to be helpful resources for easy-to-use talking points and data.

SAMPLE LTES

FINANCIAL BENEFIT

Though 38 states have expanded Medicaid, giving millions access to health care they need and deserve, Georgia is not one of them. Each year for eight years, our governor and state lawmakers have turned down \$3 Billion in federal funds and denied 500,000 Georgians health care.

Now the federal government is meeting the urgent need for health care and economic support created by the pandemic by offering Georgia immediate and substantial financial relief if our policymakers expand Medicaid. I'm talking \$1.3-\$2 Billion that Georgia's economy won't otherwise see. Those dollars will not only bring lifesaving care to people who need it, covering the entire cost of expanding Medicaid, but will also allow us to address significant budget needs in our state, especially as businesses in our state get back on their feet. With the extra funds from expansion, we could **[Select one of the ways the additional dollars could be used or write your own:**

- restore the funding cuts made to schools at the beginning of the pandemic so students can succeed.
- speed up the expansion of broadband connectivity to thousands of rural and disconnected Georgians.
- fund worker training programs or pay for infrastructure projects that power Georgia's economy.
- reduce or eliminate the waiting list for people with disabilities to get care and supports in their communities.

Medicaid expansion was already a good deal for Georgia that our state leaders left on the table. Now, it's a deal we can't pass up.

Your Name
Town, State

STATE BUDGET SAVINGS

There are huge federal incentives available to Georgia if we expand Medicaid. We could afford to expand Medicaid without the funds and we can certainly afford to expand now that they are available. We'll be able to provide health coverage to 500,000 Georgians. If our leaders choose to expand Medicaid, Georgia would see an additional \$1-2 Billion. That's on top of the savings we already know that Medicaid expansion would produce for our state budget.

Studies that examine the fiscal impact of Medicaid expansion on states that have already expanded consistently find that expansion leads to significant budget savings and significant revenue increases. Expanding Medicaid would save Georgia money in uncompensated care, corrections, and mental health care and allow us to collect additional tax dollars from the new insurance plans. It was already a good deal. Now, with billions of dollars on the line, it's a deal that we can't pass up.

Your Name
Town, State

RACE AND EQUITY

It is long past time for Georgia to expand Medicaid. If we have learned anything from the COVID-19 crisis and Movement for Black Lives this past year, it's that our health is interdependent. We all do better when everyone does better.

One-third of Georgians who would gain coverage from Medicaid expansion are Black and 22% are Latinx. In states that already expanded Medicaid, health inequities have been reduced. We need this in Georgia.

Due to systemic racism and unfair barriers to health care, people of color have higher rates of health conditions like asthma, diabetes and heart disease than white people. They are more likely to receive bills for care they cannot afford and less likely to have paid sick leave at work. This is an injustice. It's far past time to level the playing field so all Georgians can access affordable care.

With new federal incentives, Medicaid expansion is an even better deal for Georgia than before. If our legislators expand Medicaid today, they can bring billions of dollars into our state, address the COVID-19 crisis and move Georgia forward on a path to health equity.

Your Name
Town, State

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

There is no doubt that Georgia is a great place to live and raise a family, but not everyone has the same experience. Due to long-standing inequities, not all children and families have the same opportunities to thrive in Georgia that others do and that we all deserve.

The opportunity for children and families to be successful depends largely on both individual and community health. The health of children is inextricably linked to the health of their parents. Health insurance plays a huge part in anyone's ability to be healthy and Medicaid expansion could bring health insurance to 500,000 Georgians, one-third of whom are parents. It would lead to healthier individuals, families and communities, bettering Georgia as a whole.

Due to new federal incentives, Medicaid expansion is an even better deal than it ever was for Georgia. If our legislators expand Medicaid today, they can bring billions of dollars into our state and make Georgia a place where all children and families can thrive. There's no reason not to expand Medicaid.

Your Name
Town, State

SUD AND MENTAL HEALTH

As we have seen in Georgia, substance use and mental illness rates are rising during the pandemic. This health crisis needs big solutions. We should expand Medicaid and use it as a proven tool to prevent deaths by overdose or suicide.

The expansion of Medicaid is especially important for thousands of Georgians with substance use disorders and mental illness who would otherwise go without health coverage and care. Drug overdose deaths are at their highest ever and Medicaid expansion is part of the solution. The program funds a broad range of services for people with substance use disorders and mental illness, which can support their recovery.

Due to new federal incentives, Medicaid expansion is an even better deal than it ever was for Georgia. If our legislators expand Medicaid today, they can bring billions of dollars into our state and save lives by addressing the substance use and mental health crises. There's no reason not to expand Medicaid.

Your Name
Town, State

COVID-19

While many Georgians are getting vaccinated against COVID-19, thousands of people in Georgia are still suffering. It's hard to understand how we can successfully recover from the pandemic without ensuring all Georgians have access to health coverage and care. People that don't have health coverage and are living in Georgia's Medicaid coverage gap in are more likely to be working frontline jobs and be exposed to the virus. They are more likely to receive bills for care they cannot afford, less likely to have paid sick leave at work, and more likely to lose their jobs as a result of the economic crisis COVID-19 has caused. We must close the Medicaid coverage gap as part of our state response to this pandemic.

As part of a federal COVID relief package, federal policymakers recently made an additional \$1.3-2 Billion available for Georgia if our policymakers expand Medicaid. Those dollars will not only cover the cost of expansion but can go to helping us recover from this health and economic impacts. We should take these new federal incentives and use them to accelerate our state's recovery from COVID-19.

Your Name
Town, State