



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact

Patrick Getlein

Communications Director

patrick@thecommonwealthinstitute.org

804-396-2051 x103

www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org

December 30, 2013

195,000 Virginians Headed for Coverage Gap Jan. 1

70 percent are in working families

RICHMOND, VA – Lawmakers’ refusal to expand access to health care through Medicaid will leave 195,000 hard-working Virginians out in the cold and hundreds of millions of dollars on the table, according to a new report released today by The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis, an independent fiscal and economic policy organization in Richmond.

“Families of four making over \$90,000 a year can get help purchasing health insurance, while families that make one-tenth of that will be left out in the cold,” says Michael Cassidy, President and CEO of The Commonwealth Institute. “Lawmakers need to fix this as soon as possible so hard-working Virginians can get the health care they need.”

Key findings of the new analysis:

- **Virginians will fall into the coverage gap.**
 - Starting January 1, 2014, 195,000 Virginians will fall into the coverage gap because of lawmakers’ refusal to expand Medicaid.
 - These Virginians will remain uninsured because they make too much to qualify for Medicaid under the current program, but not enough to get tax credits in the marketplace.
 - For example, a family of four making over \$90,000 a year can get tax credits, but a family of four making between \$8,500 and \$23,500 can’t.
- **Working families will be hit the hardest.**
 - Seventy percent of the Virginians who will fall into the coverage gap are in working families.
 - They struggle to get coverage through employers despite working in some of the most important parts of the state’s economy – tourism, retail trade, and construction.
- **Every day Medicaid expansion is delayed costs the state millions.**
 - Each day the state loses out on about \$5 million in federal funds set aside for Medicaid expansion.
 - Using the federal funds for Medicaid expansion, the state would save \$370,000 in general funds every day.

- **Refusal to expand Medicaid hurts Virginia's economy.**
 - Medicaid expansion could support an average of 20,000 jobs in the early years of expansion and nearly 30,000 jobs in later years.
 - These additional jobs could create additional tax revenue for the state, making more resources available for mental health care, education, transportation, and public safety.

The full report, *Caution! Coverage Gap Ahead*, is available at www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org.

####

About The Commonwealth Institute

The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis provides credible, independent and accessible information and analyses of fiscal and economic issues with particular attention to the impacts on low- and moderate-income persons. Our products inform fiscal and budget policy debates and contribute to sound decisions that improve the well-being of individuals, communities and Virginia as a whole. Visit www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org for more information.