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Uninsured Virginians Are in Every Legislative District

New District-by-District Analysis Shows Potential Coverage

RICHMOND, VA – Hundreds and even thousands of residents in every legislator’s district stand to gain coverage if Virginia lawmakers close the coverage gap, according to a new report using newly released data from the Census Bureau published today by The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis, an independent fiscal and economic policy organization in Richmond.

“Every member of the General Assembly has nearly a thousand or more constituents who could gain coverage,” says Institute President Michael Cassidy. “Lawmakers should seize this opportunity to help the people in their districts get the coverage they need to lead healthy and productive lives and build the kind of healthy workforce we know we need for a strong economy.”

The new report provides estimates of the number of low-income Virginians without health insurance who reside in each state House and Senate district, as well as in each locality.

Data used to determine who can get coverage.

- Using U.S. Census data, we estimated the number of uninsured people who are between 19 and 64 and have incomes below 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Level -- about $27,000 or less for a family of three, for example.
- This analysis overcomes previous data limitations and includes only those people who lived within the boundaries of the legislative districts and could gain coverage. Previous estimates focused only on localities.

Virginia lawmakers have an opportunity to provide coverage.

- Many of the people who could get coverage are working in the most important parts of the state’s economy – tourism, retail trade, and construction – and yet they struggle to get the coverage they need.
- Closing the coverage gap would mean that a family of three that earns less than $27,300 a year could get health coverage.
- Twenty-seven other states and Washington, D.C. are already using the federal funding to help their low-income residents get coverage and much needed health care.
- And several other states, including Tennessee, Wyoming, Utah, Montana, and Alaska, are now actively discussing how they can move forward.
“Virginia lawmakers should put the needs of their hard-working constituents at the front of their legislative agendas and close the coverage gap,” says Cassidy.

The full report, Every Legislator, Every District, can be found online at www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org.

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**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.