



## **Healthcare Expansion**

Expanding healthcare is Virginia Interfaith Center's top priority for the 2018 General Assembly. There are many ways that Virginia could expand healthcare, but the key to doing so is tapping the federal Medicaid dollars that are available for healthcare expansion. The General Assembly should work with the new Governor to develop a Virginia plan for expanding healthcare, drawing down federal dollars to pay for the expansion. Such a plan would:

- Help 300,000 Virginians who are without insurance or don't receive the help they could for healthcare because Virginia has not yet expanded Medicaid. This means many can't get the care they need to go to work, take care of their kids, and be healthy, productive members of our communities. Almost 400,000 people would be eligible and an expected 300,000 would sign-up.
- Bring in \$1.7 billion per year in new federal funding.
- Create 15,000 new jobs in Virginia, most in the healthcare sector that provides good family wage jobs.
- Generate \$74 million in new tax revenues for the Commonwealth.
- Cover uncompensated care that will stabilize hospitals and the overall insurance market. When the uninsured or underinsured seek primary care at emergency rooms, it adds enormous costs to hospitals that results in higher insurance premiums for everyone.
- Save lives. Those without adequate health insurance delay or skip need healthcare and thus too many Virginians die unnecessarily – an estimated 235 people will die in 2018 from preventable illnesses.

### **Key Talking Points**

- Expanding access to healthcare is a moral issue. Caring for our neighbor and “the least of these” is fundamental for all faith traditions.
- Expanding access to healthcare will help 300,000 Virginians, generate new jobs and revenue in Virginia.
- Covering uncompensated care will stabilize hospitals and the health insurance market.

### **How will this Happen**

There are several bills proposed to expand healthcare that we support, including HB348, SB158, and SB282. But *none of these bills need to pass for healthcare expansion to happen*. There are lots of ways the Virginia plan could be developed, but any plan requires money. Thus, the budget must include the additional federal Medicaid dollars available under the Affordable Care Act if Virginia is going to address its healthcare coverage problems. Because the budget is a rather complicated process, VICPP advocates should be urging healthcare expansion to help 300,000 Virginians by tapping federal Medicaid dollars.