PAGE ONE

**Health and Healing in Virginia**

*“I will bring health and healing to it (Judah); I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security.” (Jeremiah 33:6)*

*“Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, "Come back tomorrow and I’ll give it to you"—when you already have it with you. (Proverbs 3:27-28)*

Caring for the sick and the disadvantaged is an important ministry for faith communities, which is why faith communities started so many hospitals in the Commonwealth and most low-income health clinics today are staffed and funded by faith communities. Having access to quality, affordable health care saves lives, addresses health problems in the early stages, prevents family bankruptcies and improves families’ quality of life.

Virginia is one of 19 states that has not yet tapped federal Medicaid dollars to expand healthcare access for its residents. As a result, too many Virginias do not have healthcare access because they are ineligible for existing programs or can’t afford them. If Virginia expanded Medicaid, 400,000 Virginians would be eligible for coverage and approximately 300,000 people would sign up. The most important thing Virginia could do to help low-income people, mostly low-income workers and their families, is to expand healthcare by tapping federal Medicaid dollars.

PAGE TWO

Virginia’s faith leadership calls upon the General Assembly to expand healthcare access in Virginia by drawing down federal Medicaid dollars. A new poll shows that 83 percent of Virginians believe Virginia should expand healthcare access by drawing down federal Medicaid dollars. It will:

* Provide quality, affordable healthcare to 300,000 Virginians (400,000 would be eligible).
* Strengthen hospitals and clinics by paying for millions of dollars of uncompensated care.
* Add more than 15,000 healthcare jobs in Virginia.
* Bring in $1.7 billion per year in new federal revenue for the Commonwealth.

Write your delegate and senator urging them to support Medicaid expansion. Personal letters really matter. Write to them at:

Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or Delegate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pocahontas Building

900 East Main Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219

For information about your elected leaders and the issues visit:

* [www.whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov](http://www.whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov) – you can put in your address and get your legislative information.
* [www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org](http://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org) – get more information about healthcare access (and welcoming all, wage theft and criminal justice) and sign up for VICPP action alerts.

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