

## Medicaid expansion, finally

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Residents of North Carolina have waited a long time for Medicaid expansion, no thanks to our MAGA Republican state legislators who have dragged their feet for years, gambling with the health of constituents. On December 1, 2023, we'll become the 40th state to provide Medicaid coverage to approximately 600,000 adults who make up to 138% of the federal poverty level.

Providing this much-needed help has been a top priority for Governor Roy Cooper, so much so that he allowed the otherwise horrific Republican-crafted state budget to become law without his signature because he cannot bear the thought of suffering families waiting any longer for Medicaid.

That compassion is entirely absent from MAGA Republican calculations, replaced by the fever dream of bringing lucrative legalized gambling to our state, a plan that they tried linking to Medicaid expansion. They finally abandoned that scheme to get their budget passed, reluctantly agreeing to include Medicaid expansion.

Beyond enabling 600,000 of our citizens to access affordable healthcare, Medicaid expansion will help curtail the massive amount of medical debt carried by families and individuals. It will also provide financial stability to rural hospitals that are a vital lifeline for so many across North Carolina.

As Governor Cooper noted, "This means better health care, including those with mental health and substance abuse disorders, hope for rural hospitals struggling to stay open, and billions of dollars for our economy. This action is long overdue, and we aren't wasting a moment in beginning enrollment in North Carolina."

As the 2024 campaign season ramps up, don't forget that MAGA Republicans in our Tarheel State did everything possible to oppose and delay Medicaid expansion. They'd rather bring gambling to the state than healthcare. Next time, let's bet on the Democrats. They've got our backs.

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