



North Dakota Senate Appropriations Committee

HB 1012 – Medicaid Expansion

Pass Testimony – March 9, 2021

Testimony of Pat McKone, American Lung Association

Good afternoon,

My name is Pat McKone. I am the Senior Director for Advocacy and Public Policy for the American Lung Association. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 1012, which would extend North Dakota's Medicaid expansion program until 2023.

The American Lung Association is the oldest voluntary public health association in the United States, currently representing more than 36 million Americans living with lung diseases including asthma, lung cancer and COPD, including more than 103,000 North Dakotans. The Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through research, education and advocacy.

The American Lung Association believes everyone should have access to quality and affordable health coverage. Medicaid expansion is critical for patients with and at risk for lung disease. For patients with asthma, coverage through Medicaid expansion means access to prescription drugs and visits with their doctor, both necessary to stay healthy and avoid a costly trip to the emergency department. Medicaid expansion is associated with a reduction in preventable hospitalizations, including for asthma and COPD.ⁱ

Access to preventive services through Medicaid expansion also ensures that people have access to services like tobacco cessation treatment and lung cancer screening at no cost. Research shows an association between Medicaid expansion and early stage cancer diagnosis, when cancer is often more treatable,ⁱⁱ as well as decreased mortality, including for lung cancer.ⁱⁱⁱ The five-year survival for lung cancer is nearly five times greater for cases caught before the tumor spreads.^{iv}

Medicaid expansion ensures that over 20,000 North Dakotans have access to quality healthcare. Medicaid expansion is also playing an important role in addressing health disparities—one recent study found that states that expanded Medicaid under the ACA reduced racial disparities in timely treatment for cancer patients.^v Medicaid expansion is also associated with improvements in quality measures, including for asthma management, at federally qualified health centers, which are critical healthcare providers for low-income patients.^{vi} Clearly, Medicaid expansion is beneficial for patients with lung disease and other serious and chronic conditions.



The Lung Association in North Dakota supports this proposed legislation and encourages North Dakota to continue Medicaid expansion, without imposing any additional barriers to coverage. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

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¹ Hefei Wen Kenton J. Johnston, Lindsay Allen, and Theresa M Waters. "Medicaid Expansion Associated with Reductions in Preventable Hospitalizations." November 2019. Health Affairs. Doi 10.1377/hlthaff.2019.00483

¹ Aparna Soni, Kosali Simon, John Cawley, Lindsay Sabik, "Effect of Medicaid Expansions of 2014 on Overall and Early-Stage Cancer Diagnoses", American Journal of Public Health 108, no. 2 (February 1, 2018): pp. 216-218. Available at <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304166>.

¹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2772535>

¹ [SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2015](#)

¹ American Society of Clinical Oncology, "Racial Disparities in Access to Timely Cancer Treatment Nearly Eliminated in States with Medicaid Expansion." American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting. June 2, 2019. Access at: <https://www.asco.org/about-asco/press-center/news-releases/racial-disparities-access-timely-cancer-treatment-nearly>

¹ Megan B. Cole, Omar Galárraga, Ira B. Wilson, Brad Wright, and Amal N. Triveldi. "At Federally Funded Health Centers, Medicaid Expansion Was Associated With Improved Quality Of Care," Health Affairs 36, no. 1 (January 2017): pp. 40-48. Available at <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/pdf/10.1377/hlthaff.2016.0804>.
