



March 20, 2019

RE: Support of Senate Bill 1204

Dear Chairman Martin and members of the Senate Health & Welfare Committee,

Thank you for your support of Medicaid expansion in Idaho, which will extend coverage to tens of thousands of low-income Idaho residents, including many people with lung disease. The American Lung Association in Idaho supports Senate Bill 1204 to create a voluntary program that connects Medicaid enrollees to jobs.

Medicaid expansion helps lung disease patients access the comprehensive healthcare coverage they need to breathe. This coverage includes essential health benefits like emergency care and hospitalizations. For example, for patients with asthma, coverage means access to prescription drugs and visits with their doctor, both necessary to stay healthy and avoid a costly visit to the emergency department. Access to preventive services also ensures people have access to services like tobacco cessation support and lung cancer screening at no cost.

The evidence is clear that Medicaid expansion has important health benefits for lung disease patients. For example, one study found an association between Medicaid expansion and early stage cancer diagnosis.ⁱ Lung cancer five-year survival is only 5 percent for those diagnosed at a late (distant) stage after the tumor has spread, but increases to 56 percent for those diagnosed at an early (local) stage before the tumor has spread.ⁱⁱ For patients with asthma, another study found that Medicaid expansion was associated with improvements in quality measures related to asthma management at federally qualified health centers, helping patients to breathe easier.ⁱⁱⁱ

Most people on Medicaid who can work already do so.^{iv} A report looking at the impact of Medicaid expansion in Ohio found that the majority of enrollees report that Medicaid enrollment makes it easier to work or look for work (83.5 percent and 60 percent, respectively).^v The Lung Association in Idaho supports your proposal to build upon these gains by creating a work promotion program modeled after the Montana HELP-Link. This program has been successful in connecting low-income Montana residents to work. After three years data show that participants are employed at a higher rate and are earning higher wages.³ In fact, 81 percent of the people that participated in HELP-Link were employed in 2017. A similar program in Idaho could help Medicaid enrollees find employment and increase their earnings.

The American Lung Association in Idaho supports Senate Bill 1204 to expand Medicaid and create a voluntary work program to connect Medicaid enrollee to jobs. These efforts to expand Medicaid will provide quality and affordable health coverage to thousands of low-income Idaho residents, including many with lung disease.

Thank you,

Heather Kimmel
Director of Health Promotions, Western Division
Boise, Idaho

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(208) 345-5864 | www.lung.org/idaho

Please remember the American Lung Association in your will and trust

1-800-LUNGUSA | LUNG.org

ⁱ 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>.

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

ⁱⁱⁱ Megan B. Cole, Omar Galárraga, Ira B. Wilson, Brad Wright, and Amal N. Trivedi. “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>.

^{iv} Rachel Garfield, Robin Rudowitz, and Anthony Damico, “Understanding the Intersection of Medicaid and Work,” Kaiser Family Foundation, February 2017, <http://kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/understanding-the-intersection-of-medicaid-and-work/>.

^v Ohio Department of Medicaid, 2018 Ohio Medicaid Group VII Assessment: Follow-Up to the 2016 Ohio Medicaid Group VIII Assessment, August 2018. Accessed at: <http://medicaid.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Resources/Reports/Annual/Group-VIII-Final-Report.pdf>.



March 21, 2019

Senator Fred Martin, Chairman
Senate Health and Welfare Committee
Idaho Statehouse
Boise, Idaho 83702

Dear Chairman Martin and Committee Members:

The Idaho Caregiver Alliance is a coalition of more than 30 organizations and 400 individuals who come together to advocate for support of unpaid family caregivers across the lifespan in Idaho. We work to advance the well-being of family caregivers by promoting collaboration that improves their access to quality support and the resources they need to fulfill their caregiving responsibilities.

Idaho's unpaid family caregivers play a critical role in ensuring not only the wellbeing of their loved ones but also in reducing the overall cost of health care through both services and reduction in the need for long-term care. The approximately 300,000 Idaho family caregivers provide 201 million hours of care annually at an estimated value of \$2 billion. Family caregivers also spend much of their own money providing support, impacting their own retirement, healthcare, and employment. 70% of Idaho caregivers work full or part time and juggle work and caregiving for a child or adult with disabilities or a senior. This balancing of work and caregiving shows up in a variety of ways that impact both employee and employer: 52% have had to work fewer hours; 41% lost vacation or sick time; 35% had repeated work absences; 26% missed career opportunities; and 24% were repeatedly late for work. These caregivers need support. They do not need the added burden of work requirements in order to fulfill their responsibilities.

Instead, SB1204 implements Medicaid expansion with work promotion that assists those individuals who can and want to work with the tools to do so. And it includes a waiver to permit Medicaid payment for treatment in free-standing psychiatric facilities, a much needed part of the care continuum for individuals with mental illness and their families.

Medicaid expansion will help many hardworking Idahoans, including families, single moms, and those nearing retirement. Work promotion can help the small share of Medicaid enrollees who can work, but aren't working find and hold jobs, without the harmful and often counterproductive effects of a work reporting requirement. Please support SB1204. It will strengthen Idaho's workforce, save taxpayer money, and result in better health outcomes and quality of life for Idahoans.

On behalf of Idaho family caregivers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marilyn B. Sword".

Marilyn B. Sword
Idaho Caregiver Alliance

