

To:

Senator Hegedon, Representative Loertscher, and members of the Healthcare
Alternative Workgroup

Thank you for giving me and other citizens of Idaho the opportunity to give comment on this very important issue.

My name is Henry Krewer and I have been the Mission Coordinator at Corpus Christi House, a day shelter in the city of Boise, for the past 12 years. In this position, I have had almost daily contact with the 100 plus people struggling with homelessness, people who represent a part of the 78,000 Idahoan citizens who are presently without medical assistance except for that found in the very expensive hospital's emergency rooms.

Contrary to common opinion not all homeless people are unemployed. Many work at fast food places, roof tear-offs, loading and unloading trucks, motel room maids, and other minimal wage day jobs. While the little they earn does not get them out of homeless it disqualifies them traditional Medicaid and for assistance on Idaho's insurance coverage. Past unpaid emergency room treatment or use of indigent funds becomes a housing barrier which keeps them on the street where the experts tell us that, as a homeless person, they are three to six times more likely to become ill than housed people. As has been the pattern, with meager or no funds, when they become ill, they will then be faced with going to the emergency room, which will increase their debt, pushing them deeper into homelessness, or by putting off the medical care sometimes resulting in a minor condition worsening or even becoming terminal. I know from my contact with all the homeless who have come through our door in the past 12 years that access to health care can ease the suffering of Idahoans struggling with homeless and is an essential part of preventing future episodes of homelessness and ultimately, ending homelessness in Idaho.

Close the Gap of Idaho has proposed a solution for closing this medical gap in which many of our homeless find themselves (see attachment). I believe it is a plan that will work for Idaho and is in tune with our Idaho values. I urge you and your workgroup to seriously consider it.

Again, I thank you and your workgroup for letting me add my insights to help you to continue your work for the Common Good of the citizens of Idaho, including its struggling homeless.

Thank You.



Henry Krewer

208 853 9593

nkkrewer@gmail.com

Thank you for taking action to close the coverage gap! Your support for the implementation of a complete solution to the coverage gap will help gain coverage for the 78,000 Idahoans currently left out of our health care system.

Public Comment will be taken by the "Healthcare Alternatives" workgroup on September 28 at the Statehouse from 1:15-3:15 pm. Contact ebowen@lso.idaho.gov if you would like to testify.

Closing the Coverage Gap with a Complete Solution Key Messages

Theme	Messages
What is the Coverage Gap?	The "coverage gap" refers to the 78,000 Idahoans who lack any form of health insurance coverage. People in the gap don't qualify for traditional Medicaid and earn too little to qualify for assistance on Idaho's insurance exchange.
A Full Solution with Complete Coverage	<p>Idaho needs a full solution created just for Idaho that provides the coverage gap population with essential health coverage.</p> <p><u>Comprehensive coverage includes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coordinated primary care ☑ Emergency room & hospital care ✕ ☑ Specialists ☑ Full prescription coverage ✕ ☑ Full diagnostics ☑ Full mental health care ✕ <p><u>A full solution will:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ Save state and county tax dollars ✕ ☑ Increase economic activity ☑ Reduce behavioral health crises & costs ✕ ☑ Reduce dependence on emergency rooms ✕ ☑ Create accountability ☑ Incentivize healthy behaviors ✕
Save Lives and Promote Quality of Life	<p>Idahoans living in the gap are needlessly suffering, often delaying health care until their situations become dire and costly. We want Idaho families to be able to go to the doctor and get care without facing huge medical bills. A complete solution to the coverage gap would allow for full coverage; it will enhance quality of life and save lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prevent hundreds of deaths annually ☑ Alleviate stress, pain and suffering for ✕ thousands of families ✓ Focus on prevention & primary care ✕ ✓ Reduce the number of medical bankruptcies and debt
Spend Our Tax Dollars Wisely and Save Local & State Dollars	<p>A complete solution to the coverage gap will spend our tax dollars wisely and create a more efficient and cost-effective health system in Idaho. In addition, a full solution would increase the financial security of Idaho businesses and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create 15,000 jobs ✓ Generate hundreds of millions of dollars in new economic activity ☑ Eliminate inefficient and costly state & ✕ county indigent programs ☑ Save state and local tax dollars ✕ ✓ Improve the health of the small business workforce ✓ Build a strong economy for future generations ✓ Support hard working Idaho families
<p>Idaho Legislators Must Make Closing the Gap a Top Priority!</p> <p>Let's work together on a full, comprehensive solution to the gap.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We look forward to working with the legislature on a full, comprehensive solution to the coverage gap. • A complete solution to the coverage gap, designed by and for Idaho, would provide comprehensive health coverage to the 78,000 Idahoans living in the gap while saving millions in state and local taxpayer dollars. ✓ • A full solution to the coverage gap would save hundreds of lives every year. • A complete solution to the coverage gap creates a more efficient and cost-effective health system in Idaho and spends our tax dollars wisely. ✓

* - helps the homeless also.