

OPINION

YOUR VIEW

Speak up for others

There are 300,000 Missourians who are still uninsured. Many find themselves in the coverage gap, making too little to qualify for discounts on the health insurance marketplace and making too much for Medicaid. A single mother of two cannot make more than \$385 a month and still qualify for Medicaid coverage.

These are hardworking Missourians who work at jobs paying minimum wage and are scheduled well under 40 hours per week; the average is around 20. What if they become ill and can't work? If the income limits were raised, they would be covered. They would have preventive health care to ward off illness instead of having to wait until they were seriously ill to get help. At that time, they would probably have to use the emergency room — either becoming a charity case taxing our hospitals or incurring crippling medical debt.

By closing the coverage gap and expanding Medicaid, the use of ERs becomes less frequent, thus lowering the cost of covering fees. Now, President Barack Obama is encouraging Congress to extend incentives to states that have not yet expanded Medicaid. These states would have 100 percent of expansion costs covered for their first three years, regardless of when they expand.

Missouri has missed out on millions of dollars in reimbursements that would ultimately fund jobs in the health care industry, more facilities and services, and a healthier and safer life for our fellow Missourians.

Now is the time to contact your state senator and representative to encourage this opportunity. Additional information can be obtained on the Internet at www.missourihealthcareforall.org or by calling 877-

693-5690 toll-free.

Sometimes the need to do the right thing is greater than the need to follow party lines.

Carol and Rick Wiseman
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