

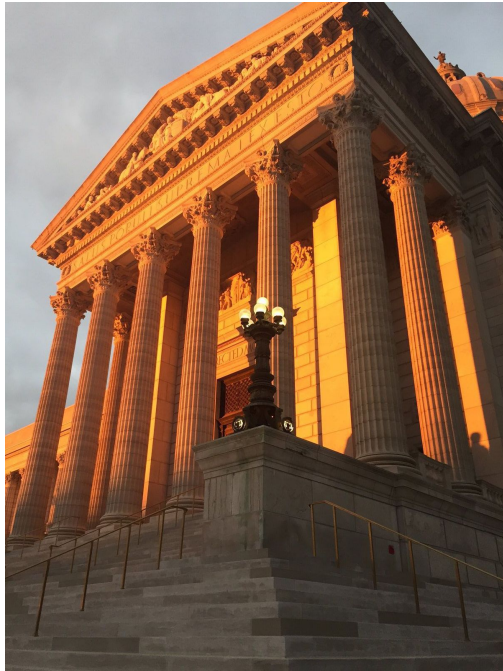
## Letters to the editor

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[http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/mailbag/medicaid-changes-would-affect-vulnerable-residents-in-missouri/article\\_9fa6acdc-6068-5b51-ba53-4f641dafa872.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/mailbag/medicaid-changes-would-affect-vulnerable-residents-in-missouri/article_9fa6acdc-6068-5b51-ba53-4f641dafa872.html)

### Medicaid changes would affect vulnerable residents in Missouri

Mar 4, 2017



The passage of Senate Bill 28 would have a ruinous impact on Missouri residents' access to health care by cutting federal funding to Missouri's Medicaid program ("[Jump-starting catastrophe](#)," March 2).

The proposal requests a block grant to be distributed to the state in order to cover the medical costs of enrollees. However, studies show that if this method is adopted, funding to Missouri would be reduced 30 percent to 40 percent by 2027. Due to the decrease in fiscal resources, it is anticipated that children, people with disabilities, and senior citizens — who make up the majority of Medicaid participants — will face denials to health coverage and services.

Currently, there is no preset limit on disbursements made for Medicaid by the federal government. The formula for payment is adjusted based on the number of enrollees and unstable health care costs, assuring the proper funds are available to cover its members. However, a block grant would guarantee Missouri only a ration of money for the entire year, while increasing state flexibility in regulating eligibility and benefits.

This means changes in enrollment and increases of health care costs are not to be considered in this annual, preset disbursement. Tighter restrictions on Medicaid eligibility and benefits would transfer a huge risk to Missouri's most vulnerable populations.

SB 28 essentially asks Missouri citizens to consider eliminating funds needed to offer adequate health services to individuals most in need, which would leave a substantial number of Missouri residents uninsured.

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