

# THE ROLLA DAILY NEWS

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## Missouri Healthcare for All visits Rolla to discuss upcoming Senate Bill

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Phelps County residents were given an opportunity to discuss their views and concerns regarding healthcare last Thursday, Feb. 23, while a representative from Missouri Healthcare for All was present, sharing their vision for Missouri Health Care. Local residents were able to ask questions regarding the upcoming Senate Bill 28, and to voice their own opinions.

Senate Bill 28 is proposes converting the medicaid program to a block grant program for the state of Missouri. Crystal Mahoney, Deputy Director of Missouri Health Care for All, explained the full reach of the bill.

"What the block grant does is limit the amount we get for medicaid." Crystal said. "Once that money runs out, the state would have to decide whether they stop accepting enrollees or cut services." Essentially, Missouri would receive a set pre-set amount from the federal government for Medicaid, regardless of health care costs. She explained that the people in our state who are on medicaid include kids, seniors, adults with disabilities and pregnant women.

"We've found there's a lot of misconceptions when it comes to who's on medicaid in Missouri," Crystal said. "It's [Senate Bill 28] going to put Missouri's most vulnerable citizens at risk."

The bill is currently still residing in the senate, and will need to pass there before moving onto the house. The goal for Missouri Healthcare for All is to raise awareness about the bill, so constituents who feel strongly about it can contact

their senators and express their concerns.

Local residents who attended the meeting were invited to speak their mind about the upcoming bill and the change to medicaid it proposes. Attendees raised such questions as "Why would we handicap our citizens?" and saying "Let's fix it if it's broken, but let's not eliminate it. There's too much good being done."

Perhaps one of the most important statements of the evening was when one resident said, "prosperity starts form the bottom up, not the top down." The shared opinion of those who attended the meeting, including Missouri Healthcare for All, is that limiting the funds for Medicaid would negatively impact the lives of those who need it most.

Missouri Healthcare for All began as a faith based organization in 2007, focusing on the problem of creating accessible healthcare for Missouri residents. The group focuses on meeting with residents at the local level, creating a grass-roots movement aimed at improving the quality of life for every one living in the state of Missouri. Currently Missouri and Georgia are the only states proposing a change like Senate Bill 28.

Justin Klocke, of Claire McCaskill's office was also at the meeting to hear constituents opinions, but was unable to offer any comment.