LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Missouri: Expand Medicaid

Friday, May 22, 2020

Southeast Missouri is home to many rural Missourians and rural medical centers that are often under threat of closure. If there were something Missourians could do to ensure those individuals would have access to care, shouldn’t we do it? If there were a way to help keep those hospitals open, shouldn’t we look for it?

Thousands of hardworking Missourians who happen to make the wrong amount of money fall through the cracks of insurance coverage. They make too little to afford insurance on the exchange but too much to qualify for Medicaid. If there were an option to close this gap so everyone is covered, shouldn’t we choose for it?

There is a way. It is called Medicaid expansion. It would bridge the gap between those who currently qualify for Medicaid and those who make enough to afford insurance on the exchange. And Missourians have strongly expressed their will to put this measure on the ballot in November, to the tune of almost 350,000 petition signatures.

It is clearer than ever in these last few months: our health as a community is endangered when any of us lacks access to affordable health care. At all times, but especially at a time like this, Medicaid expansion is the smart choice. Only when we care for all, including our most vulnerable, can our community truly thrive. It is time for Medicaid expansion in Missouri.

Gabrielle Baffoni, Cape Girardeau