Missouri Health Care for All applauds submission of Medicaid Expansion signatures

By Cody Sanders - May 2, 2020

In September, Missouri Health Care for All (MHCFA) joined with organizations across the state to help launch Healthcare for Missouri, a campaign to expand Medicaid in Missouri by letting Missouri voters decide.
Today, the campaign submitted nearly 350,000 signatures – almost twice the number required – to put Medicaid Expansion on the November ballot. Missouri Health Care for All contributed 11,811 of those signatures, collected in communities across the state.

“Across the state, hundreds of Missourians volunteered to collect signatures to close Missouri’s Coverage Gap,” said Chelsea Berkhout, Organizing Director with Missouri Health Care for All. “The fact that we are able to turn in nearly twice as many signatures as required is a sign of how many Missourians support expanding Medicaid.”

Rebecca Johnson is a Missouri Health Care for All Organizer in Springfield. “My volunteers were excited and passionate about the chance to finally do what our legislators should have done years ago – take the opportunity to expand Medicaid. Even in a region of the state considered conservative, we found broad voter support, demonstrating once again that Medicaid Expansion is not a partisan issue.”

“Today’s signature submission is a victory not only for the Missourians who helped collect signatures, but for the thousands of Missourians who have fought for Medicaid Expansion over the last eight years,” said Jen Bersdale, Executive Director of Missouri Health Care for All. “Most importantly, today marks an important step toward securing health insurance for 230,000 Missourians, who should not have to choose between accessing health care and putting food on the table.”

Missouri Health Care for All, Missouri’s statewide, nonpartisan movement dedicated to making health care accessible and affordable for every Missourian, has been advocating for Medicaid Expansion in Missouri since 2012. Through that work, MHCFA leaders know that Medicaid Expansion is broadly supported, across lines of geography, age, income, race, and political party. MHCFA is proud to be a member of Healthcare for Missouri and is playing an active role in supporting the campaign.

MHCFA staff, board, and leaders regularly speak with Missourians who are desperate for health care. Nomachot Adiang, Kansas City Organizer, comments, “Medicaid Expansion is crucial for people in Kansas City, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only made the need more critical. As people seek care for a deadly virus, thousands of local residents have abruptly lost their jobs, and with them their employer-sponsored insurance. Missouri needs to have a safety net to ensure that everyone can get the care they need.”

In addition to bringing lifesaving health care to uninsured Missourians, Medicaid Expansion will strengthen Missouri in other ways: It will bring Missouri tax dollars home, create thousands of jobs, and keep rural hospitals open.
While similarly named, Missouri Health Care for All and Healthcare for Missouri are different organizations:

- Healthcare for Missouri is a campaign with a laser focus on letting voters decide on Medicaid Expansion on the day of the November 2020 election.

- Missouri Health Care for All is Missouri’s permanent, statewide, health advocacy organization, strategically combining grassroots organizing with policy and media work to advance its vision of quality, affordable health care for all Missourians. Medicaid Expansion is one of MHCFA’s top policy priorities. In addition, MHCFA works on other health policy issues relating to both public programs and private insurance.

Bersdale concludes, “Medicaid Expansion will benefit Missourians all across the state, and we are thrilled to have reached today’s important milestone. We look forward to working with partners and voters across the state to pass Medicaid Expansion in November.”