Letter: Firsthand experience proves Medicaid expansion is vital

Jul 23, 2020
As a clinical social worker in St. Louis for 20 years, I believe this is one of the most urgent times for citizens to work for the greater good. Voting yes on Amendment 2 to expand Medicaid for Missourians is a way to increase the health of all in our state.
I work with children who are insured through Medicaid and it is more satisfying than to help families learn behavior strategies, get linked to community resources and support children as they figure out new ways to solve their problems. By expanding Medicaid, 230,000 of our fellow citizens would gain access to health care. When people make their lives better, they stand up taller and go farther. I see this every day when families walk in and then out of my office.

For those of us transformed by the Black Lives Matters movement, voting yes is a simple way to make Missouri more just and fair. Black Missourians are disproportionately affected by the coronavirus. In a time when so many people face unemployment and illness, expanded Medicaid would create a safety net.

I urge my fellow helping professionals to recommit themselves to supporting the underserved. This can be done not only by voting to expand Medicaid but by becoming a Medicaid provider. Help bring these Missouri tax-funded dollars home — over $1 billion of them — if Amendment 2 passes.

Decent health care provides the foundation to a productive life and healthy society. In the words of the late Paul Wellstone, “We all do better when we all do better.”
Lee Bascom • Kirkwood

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