Close the Coverage Gap as an Emergency Response to the Health and Economic Disaster from coronavirus COVID-19

March 19, 2020

Governor Roy Cooper  
20301 Mail Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699

Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger  
16 W. Jones Street, Rm. 2007  
Raleigh, NC 27601

House Speaker Tim Moore  
16 W. Jones Street, Rm 2304  
Raleigh, NC 27601

Dear Governor Roy Cooper, Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, House Speaker Tim Moore:

In the face of a pandemic and state of emergency caused by the rapid spread of coronavirus COVID-19, the 158 undersigned organizations, business leaders and associations urge you to close the coverage gap and increase access to medical insurance in the interest of the health, safety and economic well-being of all North Carolinians.

Many of our state’s uninsured are in public-facing jobs such as childcare workers, nursing homes aides, cashiers, farmers, restaurant employees, and those in other hospitality industries. Not only are these workers at a heightened risk of infection due to a high-contact environment, but their risk of unintentionally transmitting the virus to others is high as they are uninsured and unable to access critical care and treatment that addresses complications and symptoms if infected.

All North Carolinians are at a high risk of infection, serious health complications and even fatalities because so many of our neighbors are uninsured. Expanding health insurance would help not only these individuals but have a positive ripple effect for families, communities, and our entire state.

Increasing access to health insurance is essential to ensuring that our hospitals and community health centers aren’t overwhelmed during this crisis. With coverage, North Carolinians can access treatment to contain and mitigate the effects from the virus. Affordable health insurance coverage is a foundational component of a robust healthcare system. Closing the gap would allow more than 500,000 people to access lifesaving coverage.

Coronavirus COVID-19 is unlike any outbreak we have ever seen. This is an unprecedented public health and economic crisis. As an emergency response to the public health threat facing our state, we urge you to come together to close the coverage gap in an effort to mitigate some of the health and economic harms that have already come and the future ones that will follow.

Sincerely,

A Better Chance A Better Community Action NC  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Civil Liberties Union of N.C.  
American Lung Association
Advance Community Health, Inc.  
Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers
Advocate for Special Needs Families in Wayne County  
American Association of University Women-Asheville
Advocates for Medically Fragile Kids NC  
Association for Home and Hospice Care
Alamance Chamber of Commerce  
Autism Society of North Carolina
Baptist Grove Church
BluePrint NC
Blue Star Virtual Learning
Carolina Abortion Fund
Carolina Jews for Justice
Carolina Peacemaker
Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy
Child Care Services Association
Child First
Children First Buncombe County
Children's Council of Watauga County
Church Women United Wake/Raleigh
Coalition for Healthcare of North Carolina
Community United Church of Christ, Dixie Trail
CommWell Health
Cone Health Foundation
Council for Children's Rights
Creative Design R Us
Dinkin & Associates, LLC
Disability Rights NC
Do Justice Ministry of Community United Church of Christ
Down Home NC
Eden Chamber of Commerce
Education Justice Alliance
El Futuro
Elizabeth Summers, LCSW
Equality North Carolina
Essential Assistance
First Klass Foundation
First Presbyterian Church of Durham
Friends of Earth
Friends of Residents in Long Term Care
Rebecca Garland, Graham County Manager
Goldsboro Pediatrics, PA
Guilford County Partnership for Children
Guilford County Project ONE
Hartland AME Church
Healthcare For All, Y'all
Health Care Justice—NC
Hope Renovations
Indivisible Asheville
Interfaith Initiative for Social Justice
Jackson County Department of Social Services
Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
Kinston Community Health Center, Inc.

KidsNeed2Parents
Leading and Governing Associates, Inc.
Little Believer's Academy
March of Dimes
Marks Family Care
McDowell Chamber of Commerce
MDC
MedNorth Health Center
Mental Health Association in Wayne County
Minority Women's Health Alliance
MomsRising
Muse Enterprises
Muslim Women For
National Alliance on Mental Illness
NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina
National Association of Social Workers North Carolina
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
NC Association of Educators
NC AIDS Action Network
NC Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs
NC Alliance of YMCAs
NC Association of Community Development Corporations
NC Black Alliance
NC Business Council
NC Child
NC Citizens for Public Health
NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault
NC Coalition on Aging
NC Community Health Center Association
NC Council of Churches
NC Early Education Coalition/Think Babies NC Alliance
NC National Organization for Women
NC Psychiatric Association
NC Public Health Association
NC State AFL-CIO
NC Wins
New Birth Community AME Church
New Covenant AME Church
New Hanover County Resiliency Task Force
New Hope Collaborative
NicholsonPham Law
North Carolina Alliance for Health
North Carolina AIDS Action Network
North Carolina Business Council
North Carolina Center for Nonprofits
N.C. Conference of the United Methodist Church
North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition
North Carolina Institute of Medicine
North Carolina Justice Center
North Carolina Stroke Advisory Council
North Carolina Urban Survivor’s Union
North Carolina Women United
Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc. of Rocky Mount
Orange County Rape Crisis
Partners in Development
Partnership for Children of Wayne County
Partners Behavioral Health Management
Sophia Paulos, Director of Economic Development of Graham County
Piedmont Health Services
Pisgah Legal Services
Planned Parenthood South Atlantic
Politica NC
Western District of the Western N.C. AME Conference
Ready for School, Ready for Life
Renovating Lives, Inc.
Residence Development Company
Robeson County Partnership for Children
Rockingham County Partnership for Children
Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA
Sandhills Pediatrics Inc
SEEDS of Healing, Inc.
SHIFTNC
Shiloh AME Church
Small World Childcare Center

Sophia’s Voice
St. James AME Church - Sanford
St. Mary AME Church
St. Matthew African Methodist Episcopal Church, Raleigh
St. Matthew AME Church, Graham NC
Strategies for Prevention
Student Action with Farmworkers
The Blessing Box GOLDsboro
The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina
The Great Commission Outreach
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
The North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence Triad
Women’s Health and Wellness Center
Triangle branch, Women’s International League for Peace
Tuesdays with Tillis Indivisible
Union Bethel AMEC of Cary
United Health Centers
Wayne Uplift Resource Association
Wehrloom Honey
West Caldwell Health Council, Inc
Western North Carolina Aids Project
Dale Wiggins, Chairman of Graham County Commissioners
Witness for Peace SE
Working America
YWCA Central Carolinas
Zion Campbell AMEC