

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 Civil Liberties Union of N.C.
Advance Community Health, Inc.
Advocate for Special Needs Families in Wayne County
Advocates for Medically Fragile Kids NC
Alamance Chamber of Commerce

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Lung Association
Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers
American Association of University Women-Asheville
Association for Home and Hospice Care
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