

August 5, 2022

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

The Honorable Phil Berger
Senate President Pro Tempore
16 West Jones Street, Room 2007
Raleigh, NC 27601

The Honorable Tim Moore
Speaker of the House
16 West Jones St., Rm. 2304
Raleigh, NC 27601-1096

Dear Governor Cooper, Senator Berger, Speaker Moore:

Hospitals have supported Medicaid Expansion since the first opportunity arose over a decade ago. For these 10-plus years, they promised to help with the details if the General Assembly and the Governor reached an agreement. Not once have they said no to expansion, even when told that they would be responsible for fully funding the non-federal share of expansion.

While you all have been working over the decade to come to terms with expanding coverage to over 500,000 of our neighbors, hospitals have cared for them without question and without payment. Hospitals have pressed for reforms to improve the health of our communities and delivered the state through COVID. They will continue those efforts regardless of your decision on expansion. Hospitals have always done their part.

Our elected leaders have a moral obligation to their constituents and to the people of the state. You have a fiscal obligation to expand for the taxpayers. Hospitals stand ready to help and have laid the groundwork to fully fund the state's share through the Healthcare Access and Stabilization Program (HASP), passed by both chambers. Coupling HASP and Expansion will bring over \$8 billion of our tax dollars back to North Carolina every year.

Medicaid expansion should not come with strings attached that would jeopardize the future for hospitals, our state's healthcare safety net. Our focus is, and has always been, on what is best for patients and communities, not based on politics. We have an obligation to be here when you expand, or to stay here if you cannot reach an agreement. Hospitals should not be a political trading card to satisfy an ideological position, or a deal made with a powerful lobby group. We must be held harmless from unnecessary trades. Saying no to harmful cuts when we are experiencing the worst financial scenario of most of our careers does not mean we are against expansion. It means we want to be here when expansion happens and that we take our obligations to our patients and communities seriously.

We are not elected to office and therefore we are not the ones standing in the way of passing legislation. That burden, and opportunity, lies with your branches of government. Please adopt the Healthcare Access and Stabilization Program, which will fully fund Medicaid expansion, and expand Medicaid. Both options are essential as we continue to grow and prosper as a state. Both options are too important to let die because you are looking for a deal.

Sincerely,



Steve Lawler
President & CEO, North Carolina Healthcare Association

