



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 13, 2018

Red States Will Vote on Measure to Expand Medicaid

The states have been expanding the number of residents eligible for Medicaid ever since ObamaCare created the regulatory ability to do so, and even so-called Red States are moving to put more people on the dole.

Voters in Utah, Idaho, and Nebraska all will go to the polls in November to decide whether to ease the income restriction on joining the unconstitutional program by raising the cap on income. That move will add billions to the cost of Medicaid.



Of course, leftists push these referenda by claiming the “federal government” will pick up the tab, and more health spending means more jobs.

Three States

According to Utahns Decide Healthcare (UDH), the group pushing a ballot initiative in the Mormon state, legislators are leaving \$800 million in Washington, D.C. that could be covering low-income residents.

“It’s money 33 other states already get, but Utah has lost out on for years,” the [UDH website says](#).

Thus:

Voting YES to Expand Medicaid on November 6 will:

- bring those funds home,
- provide Medicaid coverage to more than 150,000 Utahns,
- create 14,000 jobs, and
- generate \$1.7 billion in new economic activity in our state.

And, the group says, most Utahns support the ballot question. [The Salt Lake Tribune reported](#) that even “very conservative” Utahns want to expand Medicaid. The cost, after all, is only an “extra penny on the price of a movie ticket” so “Utahns can provide essential health care to 150,000 of their neighbors, friends and family members.”

And an extra penny on everything else, given that the state sales tax must increase 0.15 percent to pay for it.

The cost? *The Tribune* reported: “\$500 million by 2024.”

The story is the same in Nebraska, where voters will decide whether to add 90,000 of “hardworking friends, neighbors, and co-workers get the health care they need, as one of the agitators of the measure [told the Omaha World-Herald](#).

Money is no object, however, as the [newspaper reported](#). “[Nebraska’s] Fiscal office staff concluded the bill would cost Nebraska \$111.6 million over five years and provide health coverage to 101,600 low-income people,” but the federal Department of Health and Human Services “put the state cost at \$153



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million for those same years.”

The 10-year cost is \$1 billion to cover about 124,000 people.

In Idaho, activists [traversing the state](#) in a antique van persuaded taxpayers to vote on spending “projected 10-year net costs of almost \$187 million to state and local governments,” the [Idaho Statesman reported](#). “This year, the Urban Institute estimated the state would incur one-year gross costs of \$39 million.”

Medicaid Spending Does Not Create Jobs

One pitch the activists use to promote Medicaid expansion is that the government spending helps the economy and creates jobs. That isn’t true, as basic economics tells us.

According to a report in 2013 from conservative [Galen Institute](#), which studies health care, the claim that Medicaid will add millions of new jobs uses “out-of-date Keynesian thinking that has been eminently disproven.”

Keynesian forecasts were used to predict that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) — commonly known as the “stimulus” — would bring the national unemployment rate below 6 percent by 2012. Instead, the unemployment rate has remained around 8 percent.

The RAND Corporation finds in a recent study that every new job added to the health care sector results in 0.85 fewer jobs in the rest of the economy. For every job created, the costs of running this health care system grow and eventually result in layoffs in other sectors unable to manage the growing burden of the cost of health insurance premiums for employees.

Galen’s report also quotes Duke University’s [Chris Conover, who wrote](#) in *Forbes* that creating jobs using Medicaid is “a shell game” because “every dollar going into the U.S. Treasury to finance this expansion is a dollar taken out of the private economy.”

The other truth that backers of expanding the unconstitutional program ignore is even more basic, Galen observed. Yes, the federal government — again, meaning taxpayers — will cover 90 percent of the bill. But the “the state must pay all added administrative costs as well as its higher share of coverage for other eligible citizens.”

Through 2023, Galen reported, the state will pay \$118 billion to expand Medicaid.

Beyond that, expanding Medicaid will harm those it is supposed to help, Galen observed. “Expanding Medicaid means that patients who are already enrolled in the program — many of whom have nowhere else to go for coverage — will be competing for medical services with up to 20 million more people being added to the program. And the most vulnerable patients who have the greatest needs are likely to have the hardest time getting care.”

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