

March 5, 2013

Texas Medicaid Matters Advocacy Day

Advocacy Day Priorities:

1. Protect Medicaid for children and other vulnerable Texans.
2. Extend Medicaid to low-income adults.

agenda

10
a.m.

Gather for march

South-east of the Congress Avenue
Bridge

10:45
a.m.

March up Congress to the Capitol

11:30
a.m.

Rally and press conference

South steps of the Texas Capitol

12:45
p.m.

Lunch & "How to Talk With Your Legislators" Training

First United Methodist Church,
west of the Capitol

2:15
p.m.

Legislative visits

Texas Capitol
After your visits, please return to the
church to fill out thank you notes for your
elected officials.

4
p.m.

End of Day

Board buses for home!

United Methodist Church

South steps of
the Capitol



South-east of the
Congress Avenue bridge

Cover Texas Now,
The Texas CHIP Coalition &

TEXAS WELL AND HEALTHY

Getting Ready for March 5, 2013 Health Care Advocacy Day

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About these materials:

This packet was developed by the Texas Well and Healthy Campaign, a grassroots statewide campaign to guarantee Texans good health care. We work in collaboration with Cover Texas Now, the Texas CHIP Coalition, My Medicaid Matters, and KidsWell Texas to ensure families have access to comprehensive and affordable health insurance. Our campaign is led by Engage Texas, the Children's Defense Fund – Texas, the Center for Public Policy Priorities, and Texans Care for Children.

Find us online at texaswellandhealthy.org or facebook.com/KidsWellTexas

**Bring a sign for the
rally and march**

**SUPPORTERS
are encouraged to
WEAR RED**

6 HELPFUL HINTS FOR MEETING WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR

1. Remember the 3 P's: Stay Professional, Positive, and Polite.

Approach your meeting at the Capitol the way you would any important meeting. Show up on time, and speak respectfully. (No arguments allowed.) If you meet with a staff person and were expecting your legislator, smile. This person has a lot of sway over your elected lawmaker's decisions. This is *just* the person you want to be a resource for!

2. Introduce yourself, including where you are from and your story.

Lawmakers and their staff listen to constituents. If you are this person's constituent, be sure to say you are from the representative or senator's district.

Additionally, one of the most effective ways you can make your case is to share a story about why health care coverage is a personal concern for you. You don't have to know everything about a policy proposal: *you simply need to know your story* about why it matters. Share your experience. Your authenticity will shine through.

3. Be sure to make your ask!

You came to the Capitol to ask for support for something particular—Medicaid and/or a Medicaid extension for families who need health care. Now don't forget to ask for it. You'd be surprised how easy it is to get sidetracked with chit-chat. Be sure to follow through on what you came to the Capitol for in the first place (e.g., "Will you protect Medicaid funding for kids and families?" "Will you support an extension of Medicaid?")

Practice the request you will be making of your legislator beforehand, and promise yourself *you won't leave the room until you have made that ask.*

4. Save your "leave-behind" papers for the end of the meeting.

Have material to leave with the person you are meeting with? During the meeting the legislator or staffer should be focused on you and what you are saying. Wait to give your materials to him or her until the end of your meeting.

5. It's OK to say, "I don't know, but I can get back to you on that."

If you get a question you don't know the answer to, that's OK! Report back to your advocacy day organizers, and we can help with following up. Simply write down questions you get that you are unable to answer, and we will be happy to follow up for you.

6. Send a thank you note.

Please thank the person you met with in a note saying you appreciate their taking time to meet with you. The thank you note is also a great opportunity to reinforce your message. We will have thank you cards in our advocacy day conference room for your use after your visits.

THE 3 THINGS TO COVER DURING A LEGISLATIVE VISIT

Every legislative visit has three important parts. A worksheet later in this packet will guide you through them.

1. **Introduction** - Say who you are and where you are from.
2. **Build your case** - Share what brings you to the Capitol.
 - Tell your personal story.
 - Talk about your specific concern. (Thank the office if you know the legislator shares this concern.)
 - *Potential talking points on the next 2 pages offer guidance if you need help knowing what to say*
3. **The “Ask”** – Important! Conclude with the specific request for your legislator—the “what it is you want.”
** If your legislator is already supportive, you might say: “Will you continue to support___.” Find more examples below.*

EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO ASK FOR:

Policy Goal	How to Ask for It
<i>Protect Medicaid and CHIP in the budget</i>	<p>“Will you keep Texas Medicaid and CHIP funded in the budget? These are programs that 9 out of 10 Texas voters wanted protected in 2011, yet there were cuts then. Funding needs to be restored.”</p> <p>“Will you work to restore funding for Medicaid and CHIP to pre-recession levels using the Rainy Day Fund?”</p>
<i>Move forward with Medicaid expansion.</i>	<p>“Will you support accepting the federal funds so that more hard-working Texans can be covered by Medicaid?”*</p> <p>“Will you help relieve local costs related to the uninsured, by accepting funds for Medicaid expansion, something that the Legislative Budget Board has recommended for Texas?”</p> <p><i>* If asked, legislation that supports this goal include Senate bills: SJR 8 (Ellis), SB 455 (Rodriguez); and House bills: HB 59 (Burnam), HJR 91 (Coleman), HB 593 (Naishtat), HB 999 & HB 1001 (Johnson), HB 100. The budget might also be a vehicle for this change.</i></p>

BUILD YOUR CASE

*Below are some potential talking points to use, during the part of your meeting where you build your case. (Remember: **First you introduce yourself/mention if you're a constituent. Then build your case, on the issue. Last, you make your ask before you leave!**)*

Most of the talking points below are designed for legislators who are undecided or potential opponents. At the end, we offer some ways to respond to common objections and an idea of what to say in an office you know supports Texas Medicaid and the expansion.

- **Having health coverage leads to security for families and strong communities.**
 - Hard-working Texas families have been hit pretty hard in recent years.
 - There's a simple way to help them out—and help out the whole community, including the local health system and hospitals we all depend on: Texas can give families security from the fear of going bankrupt over a medical bill.
 - That's why I'm here to talk about [Medicaid and CHIP and/or accepting the federal dollars to cover more Texans on Medicaid].
- **Protecting Medicaid and CHIP helps my community** (my family, my child, etc.).
 - Medicaid makes for healthier children and greater security for Texans with disabilities and older family members who need special care.
 - Medicaid pumps needed dollars into our local hospitals and communities.
 - Medicaid creates and sustains jobs in your district.
 - Our community was better off before Texas reduced health providers' rates and made other cuts in 2011. What matters most is that people in [your city or town] can get the health care to live securely!
 - *Share your story here if it relates to one of the points above.*
- **Protecting Medicaid keeps me as a local taxpayer from paying more.**
 - Local hospitals and governments have to pick up the costs of emergency room care for the uninsured. That's the most expensive type of care, and the cost gets passed on to all of us!
 - I also pay federal taxes for Medicaid. I believe those dollars should come back to Texas, for our communities, our kids, and our families.
 - *Local officials in several counties—including Dallas, Travis County, Hidalgo County, and McLennan County—have already endorsed the Medicaid expansion.*
- **Texas has an opportunity to address these issues by extending Medicaid for hard-working Texans who have no health care today.**
 - A lot of working, low-income Texans aren't offered health care through their jobs, and they don't earn enough to buy it. This is a way to help get them covered and out of the E.R.s, which is the only place they can get care now.
 - The federal government picks up the full cost of Medicaid expansion for three years and at least 90% of the total bill after that.
 - Conservatives like Jan Brewer in Arizona, Chris Christie in New Jersey, and Rick Scott in Florida decided that the Medicaid expansion is right for their states and their people. It's right for Texas, too!
 - Look at the difference it would make for your district . . .
(Show county or district fact sheet if you have one. Some local fact sheets will be available in the training area.)

- **Listen to Texans.**
 - A large majority of Texans in polls have said they want Texas to accept the federal money for Medicaid.
 - Large majorities have also spoken up about wanting health coverage for children protected: Medicaid and CHIP provide that, and have been a real success story for our state, giving kids coverage they need to see a doctor!
- **Texas is risking opening up a “coverage gap” that targets the people who need help most.**
 - The nation’s health reform law was designed so people at every income level could get health care. Many will get tax credits to help them afford coverage.
 - For people at lower income levels, however, tax credits aren’t an option. Instead, their states are supposed to accept the federal money to cover them on Medicaid. If Texas rejects the money, those people land in a coverage gap—where they don’t get help, even though others, with more resources, do.
- **I’ve got some materials here to show you.**
(Be sure to share the materials you brought to leave behind. Briefly walk through what you brought. The Medicaid expansion infographic is one item you can share.)

If the person you’re speaking with mentions a concern about government spending:

- **Plenty of leaders from conservative states have seen that (Medicaid/Medicaid expansion) is a wise use of health care dollars.**
 - It helps people get the preventive care they need so they don’t wind up getting treatment in the most expensive place: the emergency room.
 - Economists have found Texas can expect a net benefit of \$6 billion from accepting the funds to cover more people on Medicaid.

If the person you’re speaking with says Medicaid is broken or doesn’t work:

- **Families with children give Medicaid high marks—higher even than patients with private insurance tend to give their health plans.**
 - Texas Medicaid and CHIP have been a great success story for our state. We are helping more kids get the care they need.
 - Medicaid expansion is a chance to get more of their parents health care, too, so that whole families get covered, stay covered, and aren’t in the E.R. for routine care.

If the person you’re speaking with says Medicaid is crowding out schools in the budget:

- **Actually, having kids and families be healthy is an important part of schools’ success.**
 - Health and education go together. Attendance is higher when kids have coverage themselves and when their parents are getting the care they need, too.

If who you’re speaking to is already a supporter:

- **Thank you for supporting security for more Texans and access to health care!** Your continued support makes a difference. . . *(Share your story of why.)*

WORK SHEET FOR LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS: PREPARE WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

Use this worksheet to prepare your remarks during meetings with legislators on March 5th.

Introduction

Tip: Be sure to say who you are and where you live or work if it in the legislator's district.

Build Your Case

See the previous 2 pages. Give your personal story and concern for health care (e.g., "Medicaid has a big impact in my life, because...")

The Ask

Tip: Remember this is what you came for...Make your request before you go! (e.g., "Senator, will you support accepting federal dollars to cover more Texans on Medicaid and restoring funds in the budget for Medicaid and CHIP?")

Q&A: RESPONSES TO HAVE AT THE READY

On page 5, we offered three common concerns you might hear raised about Medicaid. Below are a few more questions you might get asked during your meeting, along with some suggested ways to respond.

There's not money for everything, so what would you have me cut to make room for this?

Texas will have a bigger budget when we have a strong economy. That takes investing in our future as a state, something CHIP and Medicaid do. Economists have found that **Texas would have \$6 billion more, if it accepts the funding to cover more people on Medicaid.**

My district hates Obamacare/health reform/the Affordable Care Act. Why should I support this?

Actually, polls in Texas show strong majorities of Texans want the state to accept the money to cover more Texans. (The research was done by the American Cancer Society.) In a lot of conservative states now, conservative leaders have said they'll accept the money. They want their people to have security and their hospitals and health systems to have support. Medicaid expansion does that.

Shouldn't people be responsible for paying for their own or their children's health care?

Private health care premiums are rising much faster than most people's incomes. It costs well over \$1,400 per month for a family of four to get insured. The price of private health insurance is out of reach for many families with children, and that's especially true for low-income families.

Middle-income folks will soon be able to get tax credits to buy health care, but low-income Texans will fall through the cracks even more next year if Texas doesn't accept these funds. **Having lots of uninsured people puts a burden on our hospital emergency rooms** and can lead to public health problems spreading more quickly. It affects everyone when Texans don't have health care options.

Why is this the state's concern?

Insurance, including Medicaid and CHIP, matters for all of us: **Medicaid and CHIP help keep our hospitals open and ensure emergency rooms can work as intended.** Giving Texans health coverage through programs like CHIP or Medicaid provides taxpayers great bang for the buck. It reduces the number of uninsured using the emergency room for every-day care.





Children who have Medicaid or CHIP stay healthier, miss less school, and have parents who are able to show up to work more often. The bottom line is, even if you don't use CHIP or Medicaid, you see the results. The health care system and our economy work better because of Medicaid and CHIP and because there are fewer uninsured.

MORE MESSAGING TIPS

Do you like numbers? We have pulled some facts and tips for your consideration and offer more data on the pages that follow. (More copies of the infographic and some county-level fact sheets will be available during the training if you would like to leave them with the elected official you're meeting.)

Messaging Tip	Example Talking Point	Background and Supporting Data
When discussing health care coverage, be positive.	<i>“Maintaining funding for Medicaid and CHIP is good for kids, taxpayers, and jobs.”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care jobs are saved when we maintain support for Medicaid and CHIP. Restoring funding in the budget that was cut in 2011 is a great way to help the Texas economy and ensure all Texans who use health care services have a better health system. • There is more money in Texas’ economy and in people’s pockets when we make choices to keep Medicaid and CHIP strong. Medicaid and CHIP keep the uninsured out of the E.R. and get more people treated in doctors’ offices instead.
Put a local, human face to the policy you’re here to talk about.	<i>“I’m here today because Medicaid has been/would be a lifeline for my family.”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we maintain Medicaid and CHIP, more than 3 million children will stay insured and able to see a doctor. They will remain healthier, miss less school, and cost taxpayers less over time, thanks to avoided trips to the emergency room and the consequences of good preventive care. • Tens of thousands of women get prenatal care through Medicaid or CHIP that improves their babies’ chances of being born on time and at a healthy weight. • Hundreds of thousands of seniors and Texans with disabilities receive Medicaid care that helps them stay in their homes and communities. • 1.1 million hard-working Texan adults and 400,000 kids will get covered when Texas accepts the federal funds for Medicaid expansion.
Stay optimistic and upbeat.	<i>“Texas <u>can</u> move forward with accepting the federal dollars to give 1.5 million people the security of good health care.”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicaid is already improving the lives of many Texans, many of them children. Many of these children’s parents need better health care options, and they can get them if Texas expands Medicaid.

Medicaid Expansion: The Right Decision For Texas

In Texas	Now	vs.	With Expansion
percent of population uninsured	24% <small>highest rate in the country</small>		11.6%
number of people Medicaid covers	3.3 mil		4.8 mil
annual income of childless adult who is eligible for Medicaid	N/A <small>not eligible unless pregnant, elderly or living with a disability</small>		\$15,856
annual income of single parent with two kids who is eligible for Medicaid	\$3,696		\$26,951

For the first **3 years** the federal government would cover the entire costs of expanding Medicaid.



9 to 1 match: Gradually the federal government would pay

90% of the cost and Texas would pay **10%**.
 \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

In the first decade, Texas would pay
 \$15 billion and gain
 \$90 billion in federal revenue.

By rejecting Medicaid Expansion, we are rejecting funds already set aside in the federal budget to provide health coverage to over one million Texans. The expansion will not only cover more people, but also save millions of taxpayer dollars that currently are spent inefficiently treating uninsured people in emergency rooms. Accepting increased federal funding for Medicaid is the best choice for Texas, our people, our economy, and our future.

LEGISLATIVE MEETING REPORT-BACK FORM

Report back about what happens in your meetings at the Capitol by returning this form to organizers.

Your Name: _____

Legislator: _____

Who did you meet with? (If staff, please provide name): _____

What did you ask for? _____

What response did you receive? _____

Were there questions that got asked or issues that came up you were unable to address? (If so, someone from Texas Well & Healthy can follow up for you)

Any other things that came up you want to share?

VIRTUAL ADVOCACY DAY

Wish folks in your life could join you in spirit at the Capitol for health care advocacy day? You can let your friends, family, colleagues, neighbors, and community know what you're doing and how they can join with you in saying, "Texas Medicaid Matters!"

Get the full "Virtual Advocacy Day" guide:
<http://texaswellandhealthy.org/resources>

Social media like Facebook and Twitter offer an easy way to spread the word about your health care advocacy day activities. Below are 2 examples you can use:

Sample Facebook status update:

Off to Austin today to show my support for Medicaid. Join me in telling lawmakers "Texas Medicaid Matters! Protect Medicaid and CHIP and accept federal funds to cover more Texans." Find who represents you here: <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>

Sample Tweet:

Join me today in standing up for Medicaid, CHIP & health care for Texans. Contact the [#txlege](https://twitter.com/txlege):
<http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us> #Advocate4Medicaid

Email action alerts are another great option for spreading the word, especially if you work with a community or nonprofit group that has an email list. Feel free to use the action alert language below.

*****ACTION ALERT*****

Tell Your Representatives in the Texas Legislature "Texas Medicaid Matters!"

On March 5th, hundreds of Texans will be at the Capitol asking state leaders to protect Medicaid and CHIP and accept federal funds to cover more Texans through Medicaid under the nation's health law. Many states with conservative leaders have already made the choice to accept these funds to cover their people. Now it's time for Texas to do the same.

Call or email your representative on Tuesday, March 5th. Say: "Protect Medicaid and CHIP and accept the federal funding to allow more hard-working Texans to have Medicaid coverage."

To find out who represents you and how to contact your representatives in the House and Senate, visit <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us>.

TAKING ADVOCACY DAY HOME WITH YOU

You can start thinking now about ways to show Texas Medicaid Matters! Keep momentum going strong, well after March 5th. Here are some ideas to get you started. Details for each can be found on the pages that follow.

1. Join the Our Texas, Our Future rally on April 10.
2. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper.
3. Visit legislators in their district office in your community.
4. Contact other key community leaders, like local officials who can help be a voice for health care in your community.
5. Submit an opinion article for the local paper or have a leading community member do so.
6. Find local voices, including business voices, to speak out about health coverage for Texans.
7. Speak to your newspaper's editorial board.
8. Use social media to spread the word about health care coverage for Texans.
9. Go on a local radio talk show or cable program.
10. Invite elected officials and the media to come see an organization that connects Texans to health coverage.

1. **Join the Our Texas, Our Future Rally on April 10.**

Advocates are amassing as many people as possible for this rally in support of Texas health care, education, public services, and the future of Texas. Participants will demand that Texas have a state budget that invests in the future, using the money we already have.

Learn more at <http://txforward.org>. If you can't be at the rally in person, be sure to call your officials with your ideas about the state budget that day.

2. **Write a letter to the editor of your local paper.**

Letters to the editor of the local daily newspaper, news weekly, and other publications are typically short (less than 200 words, though shorter is often better and more likely to be published). Letters should address only one point and should be signed with the full name and contact information of the writer. Look at your newspaper's letters page or website for more advice on how to write a letter that will get published and where to submit it.

Note: some papers only publish letters that refer to stories or editorials the newspaper recently ran. If that's the case with your hometown paper, scan regularly for Medicaid in the news. If you're responding to something in the paper, remember not to bury your own message by spending all your space refuting. Use the talking points in this document to get out the word.

3. **Visit legislators in their district office in your community.**

Texas lawmakers have a home district office, as well as an office in the capitol in Austin. (Contact information for both offices can be found at <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>). During recesses and on weekends, many elected officials are in their home district offices. You can contact your state senator(s) and representative(s) about visiting them in their office to discuss health coverage for Texans. Mention your intention when you call, and you may be connected with a scheduler who will arrange for either a direct meeting with the legislator and/or a staff member who works on health policy. Remember: establishing a relationship with staff is as important as developing relationships with elected officials themselves!

4. **Contact other key community leaders, like local officials who can help be a voice for health care in your community.**

City council members, mayors, board members for local hospital districts, chambers of commerce leaders, and others can all make powerful allies. If you have connections with these individuals, ask them to contact state lawmakers about coverage for Texans. Get the toolkit from Texas Well and Healthy to mobilize your local leaders for accepting funds to cover more Texans on Medicaid! You'll find the "Getting Leaders to Call Upon Leaders" Toolkit at <http://texaswellandhealthy.org/resources/>.

5. **Submit an opinion article for the local paper.**

Your paper's opinion page probably publishes some submissions from local residents called op-eds (i.e., OPposite the EDitorial page). You can submit a health coverage op-ed or have a well-known community member do so. Call the newspaper or check online to determine publishing guidelines. Keep your message simple, with a strong opening sentence and a calm tone throughout that clearly gives your point of view, backed up by data (stories about local families, numbers of uninsured in your community, etc.). Follow up after you have sent the submission to be sure the correct editor has it.

6. **Find local voices, including business voices, to speak out about health coverage for Texans.**

Business champions, affected families, and others can be great voices for the cause. We can provide support for your efforts. Have someone in mind? Call or email Laura Guerra-Cardus of the Children's Defense Fund: (713) 664-4080 or lguerracar@childrensdefense.org

7. **Speak to your local editorial board.**

Editorials are the opinions of the newspaper's editors that are often widely read by elected officials. Editorial writers are often looking for topics. If you think your newspaper might favor protecting Medicaid and CHIP or expanding Medicaid, this approach is worth a try. You would contact the paper and ask for the editorial page editor (at a larger paper, you might need to ask specifically for the editorial writer who writes about health). Request a meeting with that person to discuss health coverage issues in Texas. Attend your meeting equipped with fact sheets, local data, and other material you may have. Be prepared to explain the impact on local residents.

8. **Use social media to spread the word about health care coverage for Texans.**

Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter make it incredibly easy to connect with others and encourage them to make calls to lawmakers, too. If you have a blog, you can use it, too, to connect with others, recruit petition-signers, and spread important messages as decisions get made in the Texas Legislature. Don't miss an opportunity to recruit your followers and friends for the cause. Ask them to contact elected leaders about health care issues in Texas this session.

Here's the petition from Texas Well and Healthy that you can share:

<http://texaswellandhealthy.org/sign-on-in-support-of-the-medicaid-expansion/>

9. **Go on a local radio talk show or cable program.**

If you're familiar with a local radio program that talks to residents about the issues or a public cable channel that does so, consider putting together a three-paragraph "pitch letter" suggesting you would be available for an interview to discuss health coverage issues in Texas. Briefly explain the key messages you'll be discussing, how the problem affects local children and their families, and why you are qualified to talk about it. Address the letter to the show's producer (call the station for the name) and call to follow up the day after it arrives.

10. **Invite elected officials and the media to see an organization that connects Texans to health coverage.**

If you work for an organization that enrolls families in public insurance programs, consider a public CHIP/Medicaid enrollment drive or a visit from an elected official to your office, as a way to bring more attention to the value of your agency in the community. Invite a legislator to come to your program on a Friday for a tour of your organization, if you feel the experience would provide a powerful perspective on challenges the uninsured in Texas face. Plan to have families who are good spokespersons for your organization available to talk to the legislators, have the tour well planned in advance, and invite the media to the event. Provide supporting materials that make the case for insuring more Texans.

Statewide Officials' Contact Information: For more, see www.texastribune.org/directory

Governor Rick Perry
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428
(512) 463-2000

Representative Jim Pitts (*House
Appropriations Committee Chair*)
(512) 463-0516

Lt. Governor David Dewhurst
Capitol Station
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711
(512) 463-0001

Representative Lois Kolkhorst (*House
Public Health Committee Chair*)
(512) 463-0600

Texas Speaker of the House Joe Straus
Room CAP 2W.13
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768
(512) 463-1000

Representative John Zerwas (*House
Human Services and Appropriations
Committee Member*)
(512) 463-0657

Senator Tommy Williams (*Senate Finance
Committee Chair*)
Capitol Phone: (512) 463-0104

Senator Jane Nelson (*Senate Health and Human
Services Committee Chair*)
(512) 463-0112

