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## **New Poll Shows Idahoans Support Unmodified Implementation of Medicaid Expansion, Oppose High-Stakes Reporting Requirements**

BOISE, ID – [A new poll conducted February 21-24, 2019 by GS Strategy Group](#) found that Idahoans overwhelmingly support the unmodified implementation of Medicaid expansion while opposing modifications that increase administrative costs. Following the passage of Proposition 2 in November with 61% of the yes vote, [74% of Idahoans feel the Legislature should implement the law as it was passed by the voters, while only 17% say the law should be changed.](#)

In the wake of the election, legislators are considering changing the law to include work reporting requirements, projected to cost \$2 million annually. The poll found that [54% of Idahoans oppose adding this administrative cost](#), while 27% support it. Furthermore, 72% of Idahoans oppose taking away health coverage from Medicaid participants who do not meet work reporting requirements.

Robert Jones, partner with GS Strategy Group, said, “Idahoans, by wide margins and across political parties, oppose changes to Medicaid that was just passed by the voters. Seven out of ten Idahoans oppose the idea of taking coverage away when an Idahoan experiences a job loss, cannot meet new work reporting requirements, or cannot navigate the bureaucracy.” GS Strategy Group is an Idaho-based survey research firm.

As an alternative to work reporting requirements, the poll found that [68% of Idahoans favor a less costly work promotion program](#), which would refer Medicaid participants to job training and education.

Work promotion programs have been proven successful in other states, including Montana, where program data show increased labor force participation rates among

low-income households. Among the participants who took part in workforce training, 58% saw increased wage earnings by an average of \$8,712 annually.<sup>1</sup>

Jones continued, “Idahoans are opposed to spending additional money on administrative costs to change Medicaid expansion passed by the voters, and would prefer the legislature prioritize spending on education and transportation instead.”

When asked about their budget priorities, [81% of Idahoans say that tax dollars would be better invested in education \(49%\)](#) or repairing Idaho’s roads and bridges (32%) rather than on the additional administrative costs associated with work reporting requirements. Only 12% favor increasing administrative costs beyond Governor Little’s budget recommendation to fund unmodified Medicaid expansion.

**About Close the Gap Idaho:** Close the Gap Idaho is a network of over 300 organizations and individuals statewide, working to support a complete solution to the coverage gap and to preserve health coverage for Idahoans. Close the Gap Idaho has led the effort to expand Medicaid in Idaho since 2014. A list of Close the Gap Idaho steering committee members can be found on the [Close the Gap Idaho website](#). Quotes from additional member organizations and Idahoans in the gap are shared below.

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<sup>1</sup> Montana Department of Labor & Industry “Help-Link Program 2018 Fiscal Year Report”.  
[http://lmi.mt.gov/Portals/193/Publications/LMI-Pubs/Special%20Reports%20and%20Studies/HELP-Link\\_2018Report.pdf](http://lmi.mt.gov/Portals/193/Publications/LMI-Pubs/Special%20Reports%20and%20Studies/HELP-Link_2018Report.pdf)