



January 6, 2020

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Health Care Advocates Celebrate Coverage Under Medicaid Expansion

Advocates, physicians and newly enrolled Idahoans endorse Governor's Plan for Funding

BOISE, ID—Following Governor Little's State of the State address, members of Close the Gap Idaho and other health care advocates hosted a press conference to celebrate the beginning of health coverage under Medicaid expansion and to demonstrate support for the governor's leadership and commitment to implementing and funding Medicaid expansion.

"Expanding Medicaid was no easy task for Idahoans, and it certainly isn't a simple task for the state to implement. Despite this, Idaho has effectively enrolled over 50,000 Idahoans thus far, and has avoided the delays and other pitfalls experienced in some other states," said Liz Woodruff, coordinator of Close the Gap Idaho. "Not only is this proof that our state is prepared for Medicaid expansion, it's a cause for celebration as thousands of our fellow Idahoans will finally get the care they need."

Dr. Andrew Baron, Medical Director of Terry Reilly, weighed in on how providers have prepared for Medicaid expansion: "Our clinics are ready and able to deliver quality health care to Idahoans who need it" said Dr. Baron. "The medical community has been preparing for this since the ballot campaign of 2018, and understands the importance of expanding Medicaid and the profound difference it will make in the lives of our patients. Smaller clinics and hospitals alike stand ready and willing to serve newly enrolled Idahoans and begin a new era of health care in Idaho."

Anita Sackuvich, a single mother with two disabled children who has been living without health insurance, joined Close the Gap Idaho to share her excitement about enrolling in coverage through Medicaid expansion. After facing mounting medical debt from a lifesaving surgery, Anita finally has health coverage. "Now, I'm looking forward to a healthier 2020."

The first thing I plan to do is go to the doctor and continue my recommended post-surgery care. I am also going to seek dental work that I haven't been able to afford for years."

Following Governor Little's call for full-funding of Medicaid expansion, Close the Gap Idaho pledged its support for the recommendation.

"Today we are celebrating the beginning of a new decade of health coverage for Idahoans," said Liz Woodruff. "We applaud the governor for calling for the full funding of Medicaid expansion and are excited to work this session to support this important and cost-effective investment in Idaho's future." Woodruff concluded.

For more information:

Web: <http://closethegapidaho.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/386914752087408/>

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About Close the Gap Idaho: Close the Gap Idaho is a network of over 5,000 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](#).