

LB 472: Medicaid Redesign Act – Close the Gap

Current Nebraska law requires people living with HIV to wait until they are disabled by AIDS to qualify for Medicaid. Wouldn't it make sense, and save a lot of money, if we treat people before they get disabled and prevent them from becoming disabled? LB 472 would be a major victory for people living with HIV and countless others who have been shut out of the current health insurance market – it makes healthcare make sense for everyone.

Closing the Gap Solves a Significant Injustice

- Across the United States, low-income people living with HIV are left behind as they are forced to rely on emergency rooms and free clinics to get medical care for an infectious, life-threatening disease.
- Today a majority of low-income people living with HIV are denied Medicaid coverage until after they become so sick that they are disabled and their disease has progressed to AIDS. Closing the Medicaid gap will open a new path to ending the AIDS crisis by allowing people to qualify for Medicaid based on income alone.

Closing the Gap is Critical to People Living with HIV

- Over 2,200 Nebraskans live with HIV and need access to consistent high-quality health care to stay healthy, reduce new HIV infections, and cut long-term health costs.
- Research shows that, with early access to HIV treatment, people with HIV stay healthier and are 96% less likely to transmit HIV to others.ⁱ
- Access to Medicaid would provide early intervention and immediate linkage to care for people diagnosed with HIV and help defray far more costly intervention by:
 - Reducing transmission rates
 - Reducing costly hospitalizations caused by disease progression
 - Reducing Social Security Disability costs

LB 472 would:

- Bring over \$1.8 billion of our tax dollars back home to provide health care for tens of thousands of our friends and neighbors.
- Ensure the health care system works better for Nebraskans, lowers medical costs, and boosts our economy by providing thousands of jobs.
- Provide 54,000 uninsured Nebraskans access to the medical care they desperately need.ⁱⁱ

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ⁱ Myron CS et al, Prevention of HIV-1infection with early antiretroviral therapy. *N. Eng. J. Med.* 2011; 365:493-505

ⁱⁱ Sommers BD, Baicker K, Epstein AM. Mortality and access to care among adults after state Medicaid expansion," *N. Eng. J. Med.* 2012; 367:1025-1034