

**Medicaid Expansion and KanCare: Public Health is a Public Good  
Statement by the Unitarian Fellowship of Lawrence,  
Reverend Jill Jarvis, Jacob Kipp, Chair of the UFL Executive  
Board, and Susan Cooper, leader of the UFL Social Action and  
Social Justice Committee**

**Public Health is a Public Good and expanding Medicaid is needed to protect our state-wide system of hospitals. This is not a political game but a critical issue of public health.**

**Redistributions of funding under ACA will mean loss of funding for many small hospitals across Kansas and bring a dangerous decline of frontline medical services in rural Kansas at a time when the threat of epidemics is on the rise. Whether it be measles or Avian flu to name only two such threats. Uninsured populations mean that such epidemics have much greater opportunities to spread among uninsured populations. Instead of creating a medical safety net for the citizens of Kansas we see bad situation made even worse as the state abdicates its responsibility for public health. Expansion of Medicaid could keep those funds going to these vital treatment centers.**

**It could also expand the population covered by Kancare, the state's existing Medicaid Program, by bringing another 85,000 Kansans into the system who make too little to be eligible for federal-tax credits to help them purchase private Helathcare.gov exchange.**

**In the past, the Brownback Administration has stated that its opposition to Medicaid expansion is based on fears that the Federal Government will not honor federal obligations under the Affordable Care Act and so does not want to risk state finances. This year, however, the Governor has place the issue squarely in the hands of the State Legislature, where he believes it belongs. This seems to reflect a a reconsideration of the prudence of not using allocated**

**Federal funds to ensure citizens and protect our hospital system. Rep. Tom Sloan, the Chair of the House Vision 2020 Committee, introduced a HB 2270 to do just that and ensure that Kansas will get the federal revenues to provide health ensure to 169,000 Kansans. This is prudent policy.**

**Kansas has been eager to form a federal-state partnership in the case of bio-terrorism threat to plants and livestock. It is helping to build the National Bio and Agro Defense Center to combat bio-terrorism at Kansas State University with no mention of any problems regarding continued federal funding of that program in spite of the risings costs of the project from \$415 million to more than \$1 billion as the state's share in the form of revenue bond has increased from \$105 million to \$307 million in January of this year.**

**Public health is a public good. Denying the protection that a robust system of public health offers Kansans is short-sighted. With the USDA reporting an outbreak of Avian flu in Leavenworth County these two issues have been joined. Yes, we should protect agricultural products and live stock, but the state also has an obligation to reduce the risk of epidemics among the human population. Expansion of Kancare is prudent public health policy for Kansas at this time.**