

March 15, 2015

The members of the Kansas Legislature:

I am a native Kansan of 67 years. My parents began their family during the great depression. My uncles, cousins and brother fought proudly for our nation and state in WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam respectively. My parents instilled in myself and my siblings the basic core values of Kansans, including honesty, integrity, hard work and the value of each and every person regardless of those characteristics that may superficially make us seem different. No matter how little we had, we always found something we could share to improve the lives of those less fortunate. We were no different than our neighbors. We had a dairy farm and lived as our neighbors did from milk check to milk check and from one grain season to the next. One year when I was in elementary school, my father had a horrible accident in which his arm got caught in the rollers of an old corn picker. Getting the corn crop in was critical to us. The next Saturday, I was awakened to the sounds of tractors and trucks and men and women talking outside our home. The community had set their own work aside to bring in our crop. This may all seem trivial to you, but this is what being a Kansan has meant to me. It is hard working, honest people doing the best they can for themselves but always doing for those in need.

We are in a critical time in our history. We have thousands of Kansas families that cannot provide even the most basic health care for themselves. These are not obscure members of our communities. They are our neighbors. These are people that we work with. People whose children attend the same schools as our own and whose families worship as we do. It seems unimaginable that we would even consider turning our backs on our own neighbors when we spend millions, even billions of dollars to improve the lives of people in other countries. This is not the Kansas that I learned to love and honor. This is foreign to the Kansas values I used to share with my own daughter, my former students, and now my grandchildren.

Who among us wants to admit that we voted to deny medical coverage to children, the elderly, and the economically unfortunate. Who would want to stand proud and tell all, "Yes, I am the reason that child's life has ended because I chose not to expand medicaid". Shall we ignore our own State Constitution when it says that "All political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on **their authority** and are **instituted for their equal protection and benefit.**"

It is the **duty** of the legislature to adopt Medicaid Expansion. It is the right thing to do as human beings.

Theodore Roosevelt once said that "America will never be a good place for any of us to live, unless it is a reasonably good place for all of us to live." Medicaid Expansion must be adopted for the good of Kansas!

Respectfully,

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