

## CHATHAM COUNTY RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF CLOSING THE MEDICAID COVERAGE GAP

WHEREAS, there is now a “gap” with no available health coverage for over 300,000 North Carolinians who do not qualify for Medicaid but earn too little to qualify for subsidized health insurance; and

WHEREAS, federal funds are available to provide coverage to these North Carolinians; and

WHEREAS, an analysis from the Center for Health Policy Research at George Washington University estimates that accepting the designated federal funds now would make health coverage available to more than 1,800 people in Chatham County by the end of 2016; and

WHEREAS, due to North Carolina declining to accept these funds, the same study finds that in 2014 and 2015 Chatham County alone has already missed an opportunity to generate over 250 new jobs, \$12 million in new business activity and \$528 thousand in new county tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, between 2016 and 2020, accepting these funds would stimulate an additional \$50 million in Chatham County economic growth, \$80 million in business activity, and \$2.1 million in additional county tax revenues, and save \$8.5 million in uncompensated hospital care, and

WHEREAS, using statewide data, the same study estimates that, by accepting these funds, we would extend coverage to hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians, and between 2016 and 2020 we would bring in \$21 billion in federal funds and increase North Carolina state tax revenue by \$862 million; and

WHEREAS, a review by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Urban Institute found that, nationwide, for every \$1 that a state spends to extend coverage to these lowest income people, \$13.41 in Federal funds flow into the state;

WHEREAS, studies in the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *Health Affairs* show that Medicaid coverage improves health outcomes, reduces mortality, and protects patients from catastrophic medical bills; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Actuaries estimates that private insurance premiums will be lower in states that accept the funds to extend health coverage to their lowest income people and higher in states, like North Carolina, that do not; and

WHEREAS, the Chatham County Commissioners believe all residents should have reasonable access to quality, affordable health coverage;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY THAT:

- 1) The Chatham County Commissioners urge the North Carolina General Assembly and the Governor to accept federal funds to assure that all North Carolinians have access to coverage for health care.
- 2) This resolution shall be effective on and after its passage.