



January 29, 2015

Tennessee General Assembly
Legislative Plaza
Nashville, TN 37243

Members of the 109th Tennessee General Assembly,

We are writing to you as members of the Coalition of a Healthy Tennessee to urge your support for Insure Tennessee.

Our coalition is comprised of more than 100 Tennessee-based membership organizations, businesses, health providers, faith and civic enterprises that span this state, in every community, from Memphis to the Tri-Cities. Our members represent tens of thousands of Tennesseans – business owners, front-line health care providers including physicians and nurses, economic developers, church leaders and supporters of military veterans.

Our reasons for supporting Insure Tennessee are simple:

- It is a Tennessee-specific plan, designed to meet Tennessee's needs. Unlike traditional Medicaid, Insure Tennessee is market-based, promotes personal responsibility, addresses cost and is a big step toward reforming a broken health care system. In this regard, Tennessee would stand out as a leader among all states by offering a smart option that would generate real change in how Tennesseans access health services.
- The plan addresses two glaring health and fiscal challenges to our state. Insure Tennessee: 1) provides health insurance to about 200,000 Tennesseans caught in a coverage gap, the majority of whom are in the workforce today but earn too much to qualify for TennCare and yet cannot access affordable insurance coverage; 2) stabilizes hospitals, particularly those in rural areas, that are facing extreme financial pressures, with some on the verge of collapse.
- It has no cost to taxpayers. In fact, Tennesseans already pay federal taxes that are supporting expansion efforts in other states, we just aren't receiving any payoff in the form of better care. Insure Tennessee will keep Tennessee tax money in the state.
- Its components will help veterans. Now, 24,000 military veterans in the state are in the Insure Tennessee-eligible population. These men and women have served our country bravely, yet cannot afford adequate health care. Insure Tennessee will make this right, and enable tens of thousands of veterans to access the sustainable care they deserve.

Finally, there are those that want to compare Gov. Haslam's Tennessee approach to providing health care for working Tennesseans to Obamacare. There is no comparison. Gov. Haslam has worked for almost two years to develop Insure Tennessee – a market-based solution for Tennesseans.

Thank you very much for your consideration. We trust that you will side with the majority of Tennessee voters and support Insure Tennessee.

Respectfully,
Charlie Howorth
Executive Director, Tennessee Business Roundtable
CC: Governor Bill Haslam