

NEWS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

Lisa Church
lgchurch@brhc.org
660-829-7788

March 6, 2013

BOTHWELL BOARD OF TRUSTEES ADOPT RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT EXPANSION OF MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

SEDALIA, MO – The Bothwell Regional Health Center Board of Trustees unanimously approved adoption of a resolution endorsing the expansion of Medicaid eligibility in Missouri during its meeting at the hospital on Tuesday, March 5.

“For hospitals, Medicaid expansion is the most important issue of the decade in the Missouri Legislature, “ said John Dawes, president and chief executive officer of the hospital. “Expanding Medicaid will help curb the high percentage of people we care for who have no health insurance coverage. It will also create an estimated 24,000 jobs and keep our federal tax dollars here in this state helping our fellow Missourians.”

Bothwell has been communicating with employees about the importance of Medicaid expansion and has taken a leadership role in educating the community about the issue. The hospital hosted Gov. Jay Nixon on Thursday, Feb. 28, when he visited Sedalia to talk to community leaders about what Medicaid expansion means to the state and this area. The visit followed the Board of Directors of the Sedalia Area Chamber of Commerce endorsement of Medicaid expansion.

Expanding Medicaid to families and individuals earning 138 percent of the federal poverty level will have “profound and positive impact not only on our health but on communities like this around the state,” Nixon said during his visit to Bothwell Regional Health Center last week.

Nixon reiterated that expanding Medicaid would bring as much as \$5.7 billion federal dollars into the state. The federal government covers the full cost of expansion for the first three years, with the state picking up a percentage of the cost at a gradual pace but never paying more than 10 percent. Nixon also has said he favors a provision to back off of expansion should the federal government not fund the program as initially indicated.

Medicaid expansion initially was a component of the Affordable Care Act to help replace the loss of Disproportionate Share Hospital Funds hospitals received to

help offset the cost of caring for people who do not have health insurance, but the Supreme Court ruled that states must be able to “opt in” on the expansion.

Under the Affordable Care Act, Bothwell, one of the county’s largest employers with 850 employees, will lose up to \$27 million over the next seven years due to sequestration and cuts in Medicare reimbursements.

“An additional loss in funding due to Missouri’s failure to expand Medicaid would be a serious one for the hospital,” said Board of Trustees President Rob Rollings. “We want to continue in our mission to provide this area with the health-care services they need and deserve. Without this funding, we could face a situation that would require us to make cuts in services, and no one wants to see that.”

In adopting the resolution, the board agreed that “a healthy workforce and community are critical to the economic vitality of the Sedalia community; and ... the failure to expand Medicaid benefits to the working poor would be a detriment to the health of our community and a financial hardship for Bothwell Regional Health Center.”

###