

February 25, 2025



Testimony of the American Lung Association  
Opposing House Joint Resolution 5001 to Condition the Requirement of Expanded Medicaid  
Senate Committee on State Affairs  
Submitted via [senatestataffairs@sdlegislature.gov](mailto:senatestataffairs@sdlegislature.gov)

Dear Chair Mehlhaff and members of the committee,

The American Lung Association believes everyone should have quality and affordable healthcare coverage. The American Lung Association strongly supported the voters' decision to expand Medicaid in South Dakota, providing coverage to more people who really needed it.

Medicaid expansion helps lung disease patients access the comprehensive healthcare coverage that they need to breathe. This coverage includes essential health benefits like emergency care and hospitalizations. Also, for patients with asthma and COPD, coverage means access to prescription drugs and visits with their doctor, both necessary to stay healthy and avoid a costly visit to the emergency department. Access to preventive services also ensures people have access to services like tobacco cessation support and lung cancer screening at no cost.

The evidence is clear that Medicaid expansion has important health benefits for lung disease patients. For example, one study found an association between Medicaid expansion and early-stage cancer diagnosis.<sup>1</sup> Lung cancer five-year survival is only 6% for those diagnosed at a late stage after the tumor has spread but increases to 57% for those diagnosed at an early stage before the tumor has spread.<sup>2</sup> Medicaid expansion is associated with a reduction in preventable hospitalizations, including for asthma and COPD.<sup>3</sup>

Medicaid coverage will also help improve health care access for everyone in South Dakota, because it has been associated with a reduced risk of hospital closures, especially in rural areas.<sup>4</sup>

People accessing Medicaid don't get money. They get health care coverage. Without the access to care that Medicaid expansion provides, those who cannot afford care might find themselves plunging into debt and bankruptcy due to health care costs. Shrinking the population of our citizens who can access this important help will not be good for our state.

Please oppose House Joint Resolution 5001. We should not go backwards.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Molly Collins  
Advocacy Director for South Dakota  
American Lung Association

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<sup>1</sup> Aparna Soni, Kosali Simon, John Cawley, Lindsay Sabik, "Effect of Medicaid Expansions of 2014 on Overall and Early-Stage Cancer Diagnoses", American Journal of Public Health 108, no. 2 (February 1, 2018): pp. 216-218. Available at <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304166>.

<sup>2</sup> SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2015

<sup>3</sup> Hefei Wen Kenton J. Johnston, Lindsay Allen, and Theresa M Waters. "Medicaid Expansion Associated with Reductions in Preventable Hospitalizations." November 2019. Health Affairs. Doi 10.1377/hlthaff.2019.00483

<sup>4</sup> Richard Lindrooth, Marcelo Perrailon, Rose Hardy, and Gregory Tung, "Understanding the Relationship Between Medicaid Expansions and Hospital Closures," Health Affairs 27, no. 1 (January 2018): pp. 111-120. Available at <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/abs/10.1377/hlthaff.2017.0976>.