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Arise statement: Medicaid expansion works, and new Census numbers prove it

[New U.S. Census Bureau data show one in 10 Alabamians had no health insurance coverage in 2015, an improvement from the state's 13.6 percent uninsured rate in 2013, the last year before the Affordable Care Act took full effect. Alabama Arise state coordinator Kimble Forrister issued the following statement Tuesday in response:](#)

“Today’s good news about health coverage in Alabama would be even better if the state had expanded Medicaid. More Alabamians have coverage today than in 2013, and the Affordable Care Act deserves much of the credit for those gains. Nearly 200,000 Alabamians have signed up for health insurance through the ACA marketplace. Many of them have coverage for the first time, and all of them now have the peace of mind that comes with knowing that a medical emergency won’t lead to financial ruin.

“But Alabama still has a long way to go to ensure that all of our neighbors have the coverage they need. Medicaid expansion would close the coverage gap for more than 300,000 uninsured working adults, college students and other folks in Alabama. That would mean a more productive workforce, thousands of new jobs and big state savings on mental health care and other services.

“We’re being left out. States like Kentucky and West Virginia that have expanded Medicaid have much lower uninsured rates than those that haven’t. They’re also enjoying the job creation and cost savings that come from injecting new federal money into their budgets and economies. It’s time for Alabama to expand Medicaid and reap those same benefits.”

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[Alabama Arise](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of 150 congregations and organizations promoting public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians.