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**Arise statement: Alabama's persistently high rate of uninsured adults shows the need for Medicaid expansion**

*U.S. Census data released this week show that the share of uninsured Alabamians increased between 2016 and 2017 and remained higher than the national average. Alabama Arise policy director Jim Carnes issued the following statement Thursday in response:*

“The White House’s efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act and Alabama’s refusal to expand Medicaid are making life worse for hundreds of thousands of people across our state. These bad policy choices are serving as barriers separating people from affordable health coverage.

“Alabama’s steady gains in health insurance coverage since 2013 took a turn for the worse last year, this week’s new Census data show. The share of Alabamians without health insurance coverage rose to 9.4 percent in 2017, up from 9.1 percent the previous year and above the national average of 8.8 percent. These are trends in the wrong direction, and they’re the result of intentional policy choices.

“The Trump administration eroded ACA coverage by slashing funding for federal outreach and advertising to promote open enrollment for Marketplace coverage. In Congress, repeated attempts to repeal the ACA created public confusion over the status of the law. And in Alabama, the state’s ongoing refusal to expand Medicaid has left about 300,000 people trapped in a coverage gap, making too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to receive subsidies for Marketplace plans.

“It’s time to stop undermining health coverage and start investing in it. The White House should stop attacking the ACA. Congress should shore up funding for Marketplace outreach and enrollment assistance. And Gov. Kay Ivey should expand Medicaid to save our rural hospitals, create thousands of jobs and make Alabama healthier.”

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