



FLORIDA DECIDES HEALTHCARE

Ballot Initiative Campaign to Expand Medicaid in Florida

The Issue

Florida is one of just 10 states that has not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. As a result, more than 1.4 million low-income Floridians are currently caught in the "coverage gap," unable to qualify for Medicaid and unable to afford private health insurance. Florida Decides Healthcare is spearheading a ballot initiative to expand Medicaid, ensuring that every Floridian has access to quality healthcare.

The Solution

Florida Decides Healthcare's 2026 ballot initiative will ask Florida voters to approve the expansion of Medicaid, extending coverage to individuals and families with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level. This expansion will:

- Provide access to healthcare for an additional 1.4 million+ Floridians.
- Infuse billions of federal dollars into Florida's economy, strengthening local economies and supporting the healthcare system.
- Create more than 130,000 new jobs.
- Save Florida's taxpayers more than \$200 million per year due to cost savings and an increased federal match.
- Reduce uncompensated care costs for hospitals and clinics.
- Improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities across the state.
- Increase the financial stability of families who would otherwise face crippling medical debt.
- Encourage a healthier workforce, which leads to increased productivity and overall economic growth.

Indicators of Success

Florida Decides Healthcare's ballot initiative to expand Medicaid is well-positioned for success, thanks to several key factors:

Favorable Polling Data: A poll conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy in March of 2023 shows strong support for Medicaid expansion among Florida voters with 76% in favor of the policy, well above the 60% threshold required for a ballot initiative to succeed. The incredibly favorable view of Medicaid expansion expressed in the Mason-Dixon poll can be attributed to significant bipartisan support, with 62% of Republicans and 74% of Independents in support.

In a poll conducted by Clarity Campaign Labs in October of 2023, a compelling majority of Florida voters showcased their support for Florida Decides Healthcare's Medicaid expansion initiative. With a robust sample of 2,492 registered voters, the initiative received a 66% approval rating, notably surpassing the 60% threshold needed for ballot initiative success. This promising result is particularly significant given the poll's conservative +7 Republican model and its tight 1.76% margin of error. The strong starting point is aligned with the general trend of Medicaid expansion's popularity in Florida, which garners 76% approval when presented in simpler terms. This early indication of broad support across the electorate presents a favorable climate for the initiative's success.

Recent Medicaid Expansion Victories: Since 2020, 8 states have successfully expanded Medicaid through ballot initiatives or legislative actions, including 7 states under Republican control (Utah, Idaho, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, South Dakota, and North Carolina). These victories demonstrate growing bipartisan momentum for Medicaid expansion efforts across the country.

Successful Ballot Initiatives in Florida: In recent years, Florida has seen several successful and arguably left-of-center ballot initiatives, such as a minimum wage increase in 2020, restoration of voting rights to ex-felons in 2018, legalization of medical marijuana in 2016, a land conservation trust fund in 2014, and a fair redistricting amendment in 2010. These victories highlight Florida voters' willingness to support progressive policy changes through the ballot initiative process, despite the state's continued trend of electing Republican candidates.

Conditions for Success

To successfully enact Medicaid expansion in Florida through the 2026 ballot, Florida Decides Healthcare must:

- Draft clear and concise amendment language that adheres to Florida's single-subject requirement.
- Obtain approval from the Florida Division of Elections to collect petition signatures.
- Collect a minimum number of valid petition signatures from registered Florida voters equal to 8% of the total turnout in the 2024 Presidential Election cycle (891,589 in 2020), including 8% of the 2024 Presidential Election turnout in 14 of the state's 28 congressional districts.
- Ensure that the amendment language is reviewed and approved by the Florida Supreme Court.
- Obtain YES votes from at least 60% of those voting on the initiative in the 2026 General Election

The Coalition

Florida Decides Healthcare is currently supported by a diverse coalition of policy experts, healthcare providers, patient advocates, employee associations, and directly impacted individuals. The organization recognizes that Medicaid expansion would have a positive impact on various industries and sectors of Florida's economy. As a result, Florida Decides Healthcare is looking to expand its coalition to include major employers in industries such as hospitality and other growing economic sectors, in addition to those directly involved in the health field. Florida Decides Healthcare is continuously working to build a strong and diverse coalition that can effectively advocate for Medicaid expansion and its benefits to the state.

Executive Committee

Florida Decides Healthcare's Executive Committee is tasked with ensuring the success of the 2026 ballot initiative and the campaign, and is currently comprised of representatives from the following organizations:

- Catalyst Miami
- Central Florida Jobs with Justice
- Florida Health Justice Project
- Florida Policy Institute
- Florida Voices for Health
- Planned Parenthood
- SEIU 1199
- SEIU Florida
- UnidosUS

Timeline

- Today-February 1, 2024: Coalition Building and Fundraising
 - During this period the campaign is continuing to build the coalition and funding infrastructure necessary to mount a successful petition drive and subsequent public persuasion campaign.
- February 1, 2024-February 1, 2026: Petition Circulation
 - Petitions for citizen initiatives to appear on the ballot in Florida's 2026 election cannot be collected until February 1, 2024. Florida Decides Healthcare aims to secure the necessary funding and community support to launch a full scale paid and volunteer petition circulation program on day one of the petition circulation window.
- Summer 2024: Supreme Court Review
 - When a Florida citizen initiative reaches 25% of the signatures required for ballot placement, it is submitted to the State Supreme Court for review. This review process is intended to confirm that the initiative's language meets the requirements established in the Florida Constitution. Florida Decides Healthcare aims to be eligible to undergo this process in the summer of 2024.
- February 1, 2026: Petition Deadline
 - All petitions for citizen initiatives seeking ballot placement in Florida for the 2026 election must be submitted by February 1 of that year. Florida Decides Healthcare aims to achieve this no later than December of 2025.
- February 1, 2026-November 3, 2026: Persuasion/GOTV Campaign
 - After Florida Decides Healthcare has submitted the required petitions, the organization will launch into a statewide persuasion and GOTV campaign with the goal of surpassing the 60% support threshold required for a successful ballot initiative in Florida.

Budget

Florida Decides Healthcare needs to raise \$600,000 to sustain its operations through 2024 and to harness the demand to close Florida's health coverage cap into a successful ballot initiative campaign. The campaign estimates that it will cost roughly \$22 million to ensure ballot placement in the 2026 election (including potential legal challenges), and currently has a goal of raising the first \$3 million of this cost by Q1 of 2024.

Your Impact

The generous support of individuals and interested organizations is critical to the success of Florida Decides Healthcare's mission. With your help, we can:

- Execute a robust and successful paid and volunteer petition circulation program.
- Conduct targeted outreach and media campaigns to raise awareness about the ballot initiative.
- Mobilize and engage grassroots supporters and recruit local volunteers.
- Fund research and policy analysis to support the case for Medicaid expansion.
- Host town halls, debates, and community events to engage voters on the issue.
- Develop and distribute educational materials to help voters make informed decisions.

Help Let Florida Decide Healthcare

Together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of countless Floridians. By supporting Florida Decides Healthcare, you are not only investing in the health of Floridians but also in the economic vitality of the state. Help us bring much-needed healthcare access to Florida with your financial support today.

Major Donor Levels

Executive Committee: Commitment to raise/contribute \$500,000

Finance Committee: Commitment to raise/contribute \$250,000

Learn More & Get Involved

For more information on Florida Decides Healthcare please contact Jake Flaherty at jake@floridadecideshealthcare.org or (850) 570-9309.

Address: Post Office Box 10829 Tallahassee, FL 32302

Website: floridadecideshealthcare.org

Email: campaign@floridadecideshealthcare.org

Twitter: [FLdecidesHC](https://twitter.com/FLdecidesHC)

Instagram: [fldecideshc](https://www.instagram.com/fldecideshc)

Facebook: [facebook.com/fldecideshc](https://www.facebook.com/fldecideshc)