



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2013

Ad Campaign Supports Expanding Access to Health Care *Statewide Newspaper and Radio Ads Urge Mainers to Call Lawmakers*

AUGUSTA – AARP Maine, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the American Heart Association will launch a statewide newspaper and radio advertising campaign Tuesday urging the Maine Legislature to accept federal funding to expand access to health care for 69,500 uninsured Mainers.

“Maine has an opportunity to expand access to health care to thousands of people, while also reducing health care costs and providing a boost to our economy,” said Becky Smith, Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association in Maine. “Our goal is to raise awareness about this important issue and encourage Mainers to let their voices be heard.”

The ads ask voters to call their representatives in the Legislature and encourage them to support accepting funds to expand access to health care. The ads provide a number to make the call simple, 800-480-3923.

“Despite working hard every day, too many Maine people are just one illness or one accident away from financial ruin because they lack access to affordable, adequate health care coverage,” said John Hennessy, Associate State Director for Advocacy for AARP Maine. “By accepting federal funds for health care expansion, Maine can make a real difference in the lives of thousands of people.”

A [recent poll](#), conducted by the nonpartisan Maine People’s Resource Center, found that more than 68 percent of Mainers support accepting federal dollars to expand access to health care.

“Access to health care, including preventive care and treatment for diseases like cancer, saves lives,” said Hilary Schneider, State Government Relations and Advocacy Director for ACS CAN. “Maine shouldn’t miss this opportunity to help nearly 70,000 people live healthier, more secure lives. Federal dollars are already set aside for Maine. We should put them to work making a difference in our state.”

In addition to the ads, the [Cover Maine Now! Coalition](#), which includes the sponsors of the ads, is collecting signatures on a [petition](#) asking the Maine Legislature to support expanding access to health care. More than 700 Mainers have signed already.

The Cover Maine Now! Coalition, which includes more than 85 organizations, was formed to support accepting federal funds to expand access to quality, affordable health care.

The coalition supports [legislation introduced by Rep. Linda Sanborn](#) of Gorham that would authorize Maine to accept federal dollars to expand access to health care. The bill has support from Democrats, Republicans and Independents in the Legislature.

For a full list of Cover Maine Now! Coalition members, visit: <http://www.covermainenow.com>.

Radio ad script:

“Right now, the Maine Legislature has an opportunity to improve the lives of thousands of our citizens. Mainers who have lost their jobs or are struggling in jobs without health insurance will finally have access to affordable health care if the Legislature accepts federal funding to expand Medicaid.

“Expanding coverage will give hardworking Mainers the security of knowing they can get the care they need. It will also give Mainers access to critical, lifesaving preventative care and treatment for chronic diseases like cancer, heart disease and stroke.

“And if that wasn’t enough, preventative care means fewer people will be forced to make expensive trips to the emergency room.

“Mainers have worked too hard to be denied health care. Call 1-800-480-3923 and tell them, ‘don’t turn your back on hardworking Mainers. Support accepting federal funds for Medicaid.’

“That’s 1-800-480-3923.”

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