

Mississippi could gain 21,700 jobs under Medicaid expansion

Mississippi Today
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Investigative Reporting

Expanding Medicaid in Mississippi will create roughly three times the number of jobs as the Nissan plant in Canton and the Toyota Motors Manufacturing plant in Blue Springs did combined, according to a national report released Thursday.

In Mississippi, of the 21,700 new jobs possibly created with Medicaid expansion, 12,500 of the jobs will be created in healthcare, 1,400 in construction, 2,600 in retail, 400 in finance and insurance and 4,900 in other sectors, according to the report, The Economic and Employment Effects of Medicaid Expansions Under the American Rescue Plan.

As a comparison, the Nissan plant in Canton had roughly 5,250 employees pre-pandemic and the Toyota Motors plant had about 2,000 employees pre-pandemic.

The report by the Washington-based Commonwealth Fund, a national philanthropy engaged in independent research on health and social policy, and the George Washington University's



Health care worker Bonita Dennis signs a petition to get Medicaid expansion placed on the 2022 ballot.

Credit: Vickie D. King/Mississippi Today

Milken Institute School of Public Health says expanding Medicaid in Mississippi and 13 other states can help those states and the rest of the nation recover from recession and the negative effects of COVID-19.

“Medicaid expansion is a no-brainer for Mississippi,” said Sen. David Blount, D-Jackson. “Refusal to expand Medicaid has cost our Mississippi hospitals and health care providers billions of dollars.”

Estimates put the amount that Mississippi has already forfeited for rejecting Medicaid expansion at about \$7 billion. If the state continues to reject expansion, the state

would forfeit another \$13 billion, according to Insurance Commissioner Mike Chaney. President Joe Biden included in his American Rescue Plan additional money for expanding Medicaid in the 14 states.

“States that have elected not to expand Medicaid are leaving millions of the poorest people in the country without access to affordable health insurance,” Commonwealth Fund President Dr. David Blumenthal said in a statement.

In addition to providing health insurance and strengthening access to af-

fordable health care, the additional federal support could create more than 1 million new jobs if all 14 states decide to expand Medicaid by 2022, the report stated.

In addition to Mississippi, the other states that have yet to expand Medicaid are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Last year, Missouri and Oklahoma passed ballot expansions to begin Medicaid expansion, but Missouri's governor has stated his opposition to that expansion.

Blumenthal said Biden's plan is a fresh opportunity not only to extend healthcare coverage to more than 4 million people but also to promote job and economic growth.

The report says expanding Medicaid in the 14 states could produce more than 1 million new jobs in 2022.

Blount said there are more than 100,000 Mississippians who are self-employed or work in jobs that do not provide health insurance that have no access to regular health care.

“For more than a decade we've heard political excuses and no alternative plan at all. Will the poorest and least healthy state be the last in the

country to make the obvious choice?” Blount asked. Medicaid expansion legislation once again failed in the Mississippi Legislature this year as in previous years.

Republican Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves and his predecessor former Gov. Phil Bryant, also a Republican, have opposed Medicaid expansion.

Reeves recently said he remains opposed to expanding Medicaid citing cost despite the sweetened federal funding. However, Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann, also a Republican, has said he is open to a discussion about expanding Medicaid. He said the same during his campaign for that office.

Mississippi Hospital Association President Tim Moore said the association has advocated for Medicaid expansion for almost decade. He said expanding Medicaid in 2022 would lead to more than 200,000 working poor having access to health care. The state will gain up to \$800 million in additional federal funds over the next two years, then more than a \$1 billion in subsequent years. Moore also said Medicaid expansion is crucial to keeping rural hospitals open. He said when a family member is having a heart attack, stroke or is injured on

the farm, you can't afford to drive long distances to get emergency care.

Often, in many rural communities, hospitals and the healthcare industry serve as the largest employers, Moore said.

“We have to preserve our community hospitals,” Moore said.

Over the past decade, a half dozen of Mississippi's rural hospitals have closed, he said. More than half are now at risk of immediate closure. Moore believes momentum is at its highest level to expand Medicaid in Mississippi. He said surveys show the public support Medicaid expansion.

A grassroots effort had begun to collect the more the more than 106,000 signatures needed of registered voters to place Medicaid expansion on the 2022 ballot, but the effort has been suspended after a Mississippi Supreme Court decision May 14 overturning a medical marijuana initiative approved by voters last year. A majority of state high court justices ruled the state's initiative process was outdated.

Speaker of the House Philip Gunn and some other state leaders are now urging Gov. Tate Reeves to call a special session to allow lawmakers to reinstate the voters' initiative.

2020 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report
Castalian Springs Water Association
PWS#: 0260003
May 2021

We're pleased to present to you this year's Annual Quality Water Report. This report is designed to inform you about the quality water and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies. Our water is purchased from the Holmes Interstate Utility District that has wells drawing from the Meridian Upper Wilcox Aquifer.

The source water assessment has been completed for our public water system to determine the overall susceptibility of its drinking water supply to identify potential sources of contamination. A report containing detailed information on how the susceptibility determinations were made has been furnished to our public water system and is available for viewing upon request. The wells for the Holmes Interstate Utility District have received moderate rankings in terms of susceptibility to contamination.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Mike Allen at 601.416.3997. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please join us at any of our regularly scheduled meeting to be held September 9, 2021 at 7:00 PM at West City Hall.

We routinely monitor for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. This table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that were detected during the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2020. In cases where monitoring wasn't required in 2020, the table reflects the most recent results. As water travels over the surface of land or underground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive materials and can pick up substances or contaminants from the presence of animals or from human activity; microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife; inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm-water runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm-water runoff, and residential uses; organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations and septic systems; radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

In this table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Action Level - the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) - The "Goal"(MCLG) is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL) - The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) - The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk of health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l) - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

TEST RESULTS							
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Date Collected	Level Detected	Range of Detects or # of Samples Exceeding MCL/AL/MRDL	Unit Measure -ment	MCLG	MCL
Inorganic Contaminants							
10. Barium	N	2018*	.073	No Range	ppm	2	2
14. Copper	N	2016/18*	.3	0	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3
17. Lead	N	2016/18*	2	0	ppb	0	AL=15
19. Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	N	2019*	.11	No Range	ppm	10	10
Sodium	N	2019*	78000	No Range	ppb	0	0
Disinfection By-Products							
82. THM [Total Trihalomethanes]	N	2017*	1.51	No Range	ppb	0	80
Chlorine	N	2020	1.1	1 - 1.2	mg/l	0	MRDL = 4

* Most recent sample. No sample required for 2020.

As you can see by the table, our system had no violations. We're proud that your drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and State requirements. We have learned through our monitoring and testing that some contaminants have been detected however the EPA has determined that your water IS SAFE at these levels.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a monthly basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. In an effort to ensure systems complete all monitoring requirements, MSDH now notifies systems of any missing samples prior to the end of the compliance period.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Our water system is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>. The Mississippi State Department of Health Public Health Laboratory offers lead testing. Please contact 601.576.7582 if you wish to have your water tested.

All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by substances that are naturally occurring or man made. These substances can be microbes, inorganic or organic chemicals and radioactive substances. All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1.800.426.4791.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline 1.800.426.4791.

The Castalian Water works around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life and our children's future.

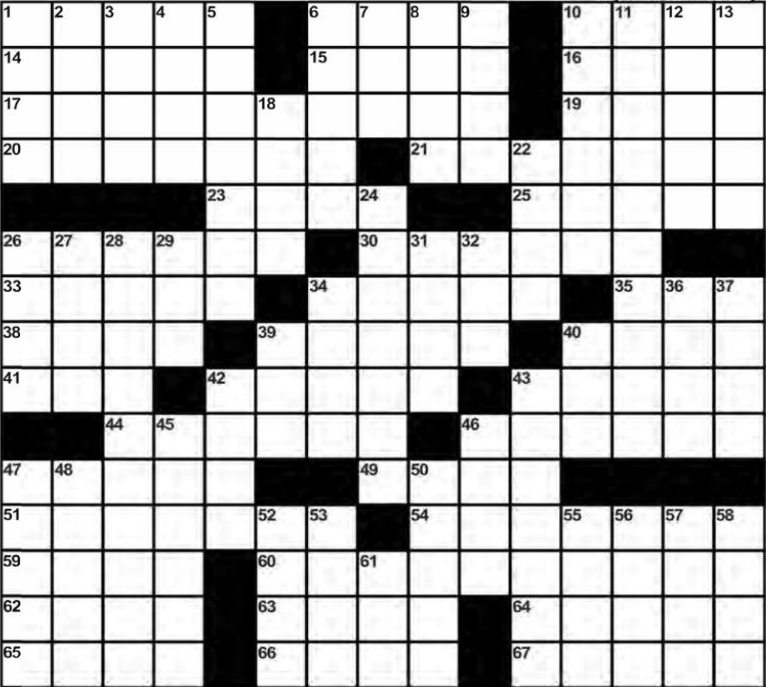
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1) Baron Cohen's movie
- 6) Spanish finger food
- 10) Maddux in Cooperstown
- 14) Singer with the album "25"
- 15) Birthstone for many Libras
- 16) Steak order
- 17) Guardians of the Tower of London
- 19) Major Spanish river
- 20) With suspicion, as a look
- 21) Houseguest's place to sack out
- 23) S&L conveniences
- 25) Parenthetical words
- 26) Scorpion attacks
- 30) Gun enclosure
- 33) "Gay" capital
- 34) Off-the-wall shot
- 35) Eustachian tube site
- 38) Sign over a theater door
- 39) __ fours (small cakes)
- 40) Colombian metropolis
- 41) Insult, on the street
- 42) Part of MO
- 43) Golf green border
- 44) Rig driver
- 46) Brought a smile to
- 47) Nuts go-with
- 49) Leave an impression?
- 51) Eisenhower Library locale
- 54) "Nature" essayist
- 59) Eric of "Troy"
- 60) Small hexagonal cracker
- 62) Spy Aldrich
- 63) Blacken on the grill
- 64) Bench pieces
- 65) Go on a tirade
- 66) Ferber who wrote "Show Boat"
- 67) Newbies on the job

IN A STEW

By Fred Piscop



DOWN

- 1) Cake with a kick
- 2) Keatsian works
- 3) Need a bath badly
- 4) Italian auto, informally
- 5) Like almost all high school students
- 6) Family emblem
- 7) Go __ (lose it)
- 8) Links benchmarks
- 9) __-ran
- 10) Mechanic's gun contents
- 11) TV antenna of old
- 12) Got it wrong
- 13) Crystal-lined rock
- 18) Bits of legislation
- 22) Many a rural business
- 24) Level of importance
- 26) Flouted the limit
- 27) Danny DeVito sitcom
- 28) Tablecloth fabric
- 29) Barclays Center player
- 31) Author of "Battle Cry"
- 32) Turn to compost
- 34) Hand over, as land
- 36) Spiny succulent
- 37) Brie covering
- 39) Office-seeker, informally
- 40) Main chip, for short
- 42) Clío or Erato
- 43) Massachusetts college
- 45) "It's about time!"
- 46) Wile E. Coyote's supplier
- 47) Kid-lit elephant
- 48) President who once lived in Indonesia
- 50) Aquarium beauty
- 52) Margin of victory, perhaps
- 53) Green-__ (jealous)
- 55) Depend (on)
- 56) Hollywood VIP
- 57) "The Simpsons" bus driver
- 58) "The Untouchables" role
- 61) __ Luis Obispo