

Utah Governor Signs SB 96, Medicaid Expansion Adjustments, Into Law

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 11, 2019

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SALT LAKE— Today the Senate voted to concur with the House's revisions to SB 96, Medicaid Expansion Adjustments, and this afternoon Governor Gary Herbert signed it into law.

Matt Slonaker, executive director at UHPP, stood with the governor at the signing, because although UHPP opposes SB 96, we simultaneously celebrate the fact that Utah will finally be closing the coverage gap and extending care to 100,000 Utahns in need.

Slonaker stated, "The Governor extended an invitation for me to attend the bill signing in appreciation of all of the hard work Utah Health Policy Project and our community partners have put into Medicaid expansion. Some may be surprised that I attended; but I think it is important to be here and recognize the achievement of those that have been working on Medicaid expansion since for the past 6 years, those that worked to pass Prop 3, and those that have been working around the clock for the last several weeks to prevent repeal."

Slonaker continues, "This bill is not perfect, and there are significant parts of it that we don't support and will work hard to fix. But Governor Hebert, President Adams, and Speaker Wilson have stated that we will have an April 1, 2019 roll out date of coverage. UHPP, and our partners in the community, should be ready. We will finally be able to get coverage for Utahns that need it badly."

He followed, "Let's all look forward to working together to get our family, friends and neighbors enrolled starting April 1, 2019. But let's also continue to work to improve the program."

Stacy Stanford, health policy analyst at UHPP added, "I started this journey more than six years ago as someone in the coverage gap, desperate for access to care. Although it is disappointing that the legislature has chosen to ignore the will of the voters in Proposition 3, I keep thinking of how much this bill would have meant to me while I was still waiting for coverage. Advocates should take great pride in how we have pushed the needle and changed the conversation about expanding healthcare access. Now we continue our efforts to oppose the waiver elements of this bill, as we fight to defend and expand Medicaid. We look forward to getting folks signed up as soon as possible."

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