

# It's Time to Cover ALL Kids in Virginia

Expand access to comprehensive and affordable children's health coverage by funding Item 305 #1s (McClellan)

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## Invest in Virginia children's health coverage.

The Cover All Kids program (\$7.3m in FY24 and \$12m in FY25)<sup>2</sup> represents an investment in Virginia's future generations. Public investment in children's health care coverage has a demonstrated positive impact on health, education, and self-sufficiency outcomes later in life, leading to a more productive and educated population, workforce, and tax base in the commonwealth.

Medicaid coverage in childhood is proven to have important outcomes:<sup>3</sup>

- Lower hospitalization and emergency department use in adulthood and better health outcomes throughout a person's lifespan.
- Better academic outcomes, including lower high school dropout rates, increased college enrollment, and increased four-year college attainment.
- Increased future employment for enrollees, and more families can spend their hard-earned money on essentials like rent, food, and transportation, which boosts their local economy.

## There is a cost associated with doing nothing.

Undocumented and uninsured children currently navigate a patchwork safety net system to seek treatment for physical and behavioral health concerns. Lack of preventative care and delays in medical treatment can lead to avoidable emergency department visits costing the state and Virginia families.

- State funding is already used to defray uncompensated care costs such as Emergency Medicaid and Medicaid disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments.
- In 2019, Virginia hospitals went without an estimated \$75m - \$151m in reimbursement costs due to uncompensated care provided to uninsured children aged 0-18.
- The program could carve out existing Emergency Medicaid services to continue drawing down matching federal funding for those services.
- The program would require a fraction of the \$258.8m in state and local taxes paid by undocumented immigrants in 2019.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise specified, information comes from "Health Care For Virginia's Undocumented Children Draft Report, Recommendations of the Work Group Established by the 2021 Special Session I Appropriations Act, Item 291 G". 2021

<sup>2</sup> Virginia DPB. 2023. SB1327 Fiscal Impact Statement. <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?231+oth+SB1327F122+PDF>

<sup>3</sup> Georgetown University Health Policy Institute, Center for Children and Families. 2017. "Medicaid Is A Smart Investment in Children"

<sup>4</sup> American Immigration Council. 2022. <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/virginia/>