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## **Patients First Act falls short on closing Georgia's coverage gap**

Atlanta, Georgia - Statement by Laura Colbert, Executive Director of Georgians for a Healthy Future, regarding SB 106, legislation allowing Georgia's Governor to seek an 1115 waiver and a 1332 waiver.

"We are heartened that Georgia's state leaders see the need to extend health insurance to more individuals and families across the state and are expressing concern for the needs of Georgians with individual health coverage."

"With 240,000 Georgians in the coverage gap, it is past time for our state leadership to create a pathway to health insurance to those Georgians who have been effectively locked out of the health care system for so long. Data shows that expanding Medicaid as envisioned by the Affordable Care Act is the most effective way to achieve this goal while maximizing the federal funding available to Georgia to provide health insurance and improve health outcomes. Instead, state leaders have chosen to pursue [a more expensive plan](#) that will cover fewer people."

"The proposed legislation falls short of covering all adults with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty line (\$17,236 annually for an individual and \$29,435 for a family of three). Many of the Georgians who are excluded in this proposal will likely remain uninsured and continue to struggle to get the health coverage and care they need."

"Approximately [480,000](#) Georgians purchased their own coverage through the ACA's health insurance marketplace this year. While 90% of these consumers receive financial help to keep their premiums affordable and 60% had a choice of health insurers, there are some individuals and families who have struggled to keep up with rising insurance costs or experienced limited plan choice. Any 1332 waiver sought by Georgia policymakers should preserve critical consumer protections, like those that protect consumers with pre-existing conditions, retain comprehensive, quality health coverage, and address rising health insurance costs."



## About GHF:

With a mission to build and mobilize a unified voice, vision, and leadership to achieve a healthy future for all Georgians, Georgians for a Healthy Future provides a strong voice for Georgia consumers and communities on the health care issues and decisions that impact their lives. Georgians for a Healthy Future has a three-pronged approach which includes: 1) outreach, education, and engagement with consumers and communities; 2) coalition building and mobilization; and 3) public policy advocacy. For more information, visit [www.healthyfuturega.org](http://www.healthyfuturega.org).