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NEW REPORT SHOWS SOONERCARE EXPANSION BOLSTERS OKLAHOMA BUDGET

Oklahoma City, OK - The Oklahoma Hospital Association (OHA) today released new analysis showing that expansion of Oklahoma's health care program, SoonerCare, is projected to bring in significant savings and revenue to the state budget. The new report estimates that Oklahoma will see \$491 million in total savings and \$52 million in new state revenue through 2021. The full report can be found online at www.okoha.com/manatt.

"This analysis shows that were the state to expand SoonerCare, it would help to bolster the state's budget and have long-term economic benefits for Oklahoma, as well as improve access to care for hard working families and citizens who cannot afford coverage right now. Over time, such expansion would lead to reductions in uncompensated care and improved health outcomes," reported *Craig W. Jones*, OHA president.

The OHA sought the independent study early in January in order to update key portions of the 2013 Leavitt Partners Report, contracted by the Oklahoma Health Care Authority to analyze how the state could best cover more uninsured Oklahomans. The Leavitt report recommended the state work in partnership with the federal government for needed funding, but upon receipt of the report, legislative leaders often cited the state's portion (up to 10 percent) as being unaffordable. The Manatt report identified further savings for Oklahoma, based on the experience of other states.

"We understand with our state's current political climate, Oklahoma's traditional Medicaid program, SoonerCare, will not be expanded. But the projected health care benefits to many sick and disadvantaged Oklahomans, plus the significant savings and overall strengthening to the state's overall economy, can clearly be realized by using federal funds to broaden coverage via the state's existing premium assistance program, Insure Oklahoma," stated Jones. "It is a prudent way to use our federal tax dollars to support our own 'Oklahoma Plan.'"

Following the Supreme Court ruling on Medicaid expansion under The Affordable Care Act (ACA), states were left with the option of either expanding Medicaid to adults up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level or foregoing federal dollars. While 19 states including Oklahoma have yet to expand, evidence from those that did has consistently shown that expansion generates large amounts of savings and revenue, which can then be used to finance other state spending priorities or to offset much, if not all, of the state costs of expansion. Detailed analysis is available at <http://statenetwork.org/resource/states-expanding-medicaid-see-significant-budget-savings-and-revenue-gains-2/>

The analysis was requested by the Oklahoma Hospital Association before the introduction of the Medicaid Rebalancing Act of 2020, which failed in the Legislature this year.

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Established in 1919, the Oklahoma Hospital Association represents more than 130 hospitals and health care entities across the state of Oklahoma. www.okoha.com