



CALIFORNIA BUDGET PROJECT

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On First Anniversary of Health Care Law, Analysis Shows Millions of Californians Have Benefited From the Affordable Care Act

SACRAMENTO, CA – An analysis released by the California Budget Project (CBP), a nonpartisan public policy research group, finds that one year after being signed into law, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has provided tangible benefits to millions of Californians including seniors, young adults, and health consumers with pre-existing conditions.

The CBP's *Budget Brief*, "Expanding Opportunities: What the Federal Health Law Means for California," describes key features of the law as they apply to insured and uninsured Californians.

"As California works to swiftly and effectively implement a significant restructuring of our health care system, it is important that policymakers and insurance consumers have the basic facts on what the law means for our state," said Jean Ross, the CBP's executive director. "The ACA is already providing clear benefits to California's seniors, young adults, and individual consumers."

The CBP analysis found that:

- Up to 300,000 Californians who have been denied private health care coverage due to pre-existing conditions are now eligible to purchase plans through a temporary insurance plan. Beginning in 2014, insurance companies will be required to issue coverage to individuals, regardless of pre-existing conditions.
- Since most Californians (55 percent) receive health care coverage through their employers, they are unlikely to be affected by a mandate that all US citizens maintain a minimum level of coverage. A "health insurance exchange" designed to link small businesses and those without employer coverage to affordable insurance could enroll as many as 8 million Californians.
- Through subsidies for low- and middle-income families, increased Medi-Cal eligibility, and employer incentives, the ACA could reduce the number of uninsured Californians by two-thirds, or 4.7 million individuals. Still, gaps in coverage will remain. California will need to maintain a "safety net" network of community clinics and public hospitals to serve low-income and uninsured Californians.

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- The ACA has started to close the gap in prescription drug coverage under Medicare and increase access to preventative and community-based care. In California, more than 4.3 million seniors and people with disabilities have Medicare coverage.

The CBP's *Budget Brief*, including a timeline of major health care changes under the ACA, is available at www.cbp.org.

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The California Budget Project (CBP) engages in independent fiscal and policy analysis and public education with the goal of improving public policies affecting the economic and social well-being of low- and middle-income Californians. Support for the CBP comes from foundation grants, publications, and individual contributions.