



Testimony
House Committee on Michigan Competitiveness
House Bill 4714
May 23, 2013

My name is Arlene Gorelick, and I am President of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, founded in 1948, is the only statewide non-profit organization that focuses entirely on seizure disorders. Our mission is to “lead the fight to stop seizures, find a cure, and overcome the challenges created by epilepsy”. The Foundation is a separately incorporated affiliate of the national Epilepsy Foundation.

The Epilepsy Foundation supports acceptance of the federal funds already set aside to expand preventive and lifesaving health care under Medicaid. We do not support HB 4714 as written for the following reasons:

- We do not believe this program should only be available for 48 months.
- We do not understand what is meant by nondisabled adults. We see many people who have disability who may not qualify by some definitions as disabled.
- We are concerned about the ability of this group to contribute to their coverage.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan is concerned about all the people with epilepsy who contact us regularly and currently do not have health care, including access to mental health services, because they lack health insurance and the means to pay for it. Many of these individuals are hard-working who piece together a living at part-time or minimum wage jobs that do not offer health insurance. They would qualify for Medicaid under the expansion. They may never be able to afford to pay for insurance but with Medicaid, could continue to work.

Without coverage, low-income individuals and families go without care or turn to emergency rooms for non-urgent care. For people with epilepsy, this can result in their seizures going untreated, and a cycle of lost jobs. People with active seizures have difficulty getting and keeping employment. We receive calls every day from individuals who have lost jobs because of seizures at work. Sometimes the only avenue available to these individuals is SSDI as a means to get access to health care.

We urge the committee to reconsider, and support the Governor’s proposal for Medicaid.