

Ohio House Finance Committee
April 15, 2015 Public Hearing

Testimony by William Wallace, Organizer
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Good afternoon, Chairman Smith and Committee Members. My name is William Wallace and I am an organizer with the Contact Center and the People's Empowerment Coalition of Ohio. We are a membership based organization whose mission is to build the leadership and civic participation skills of our low-income members to have a voice on public policy that directly impacts their lives, both locally in Cincinnati and statewide.

Today I would like to share the stories of two members of the Contact Center on why Medicaid Expansion is so important for them. One woman is in her fifties and working at a minimum wage job. Before Medicaid Expansion she was uninsured. At the time we were unaware that she was losing her eyesight in both eyes from cataracts. Medicaid Expansion helped her obtain vision care and identify the problems with her eyesight. She needed cataract surgery in both eyes. Because of Medicaid Expansion she is able to continue working and be a taxpayer in Ohio instead of ending up on Disability.

Another member of the Contact Center, also a woman in her fifties working in a minimum wage job, was diagnosed with breast cancer and needed surgery and followup radiation treatment. Medicaid Expansion basically saved her life. These are just two of the many people we know at the Contact Center and the People's Empowerment Coalition of Ohio who are being helped by Medicaid Expansion. Most are either working at low-wage jobs or striving hard to find employment.

I ask you to support Medicaid Expansion continuing in Ohio because it is saving lives and keeping workers healthier.