

**Statement for the Record  
Representative G. K. Butterfield**

Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Health

Hearing on “Medicaid at 50”

July 8, 2015

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**The Honorable G. K. Butterfield**

Chairman Pitts, thank you for holding this hearing to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Medicaid and to discuss improving health care for vulnerable populations. More than one out of every four people in the eastern North Carolina district I represent live in poverty – it is one of the poorest Congressional Districts in the country. Even more alarming is the fact that more than forty percent of the children in North Carolina’s First District live in poverty. Medicaid is absolutely critical to my constituents. It is especially important to children, since 75 percent of children who live in poverty in this country depend on Medicaid. The benefits of Medicaid cannot be overstated – more than 71 million Americans rely on this program.

Democrats on this committee have done our part to strengthen Medicaid for millions of Americans. Many of us here today helped author the Affordable Care Act, which has helped reduce the number of uninsured Americans by 17 million due in large part to federal support to expand Medicaid.

But many states – like my home of North Carolina – have declined to expand Medicaid. According to the North Carolina Justice Center, an additional 500,000 North Carolinians would be eligible for Medicaid if our Governor would expand the program. My state’s Governor has blocked more than \$2.7 billion in federal funds that North Carolinians have paid taxes for and rightly deserve. In fact, the North Carolina Justice Center estimates that 43,000 jobs would be created in five years if our state would expand Medicaid.

The ACA represents the largest step forward for Medicaid since the program’s inception. Improved transparency, additional safeguards against fraud and abuse, and delivery system reforms have benefitted constituents and saved money. But our work is far from done. I will continue to fight to expand Medicaid in each and every state.