

# NAACP NEWS

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Francys Johnson, President  
Georgia NAACP

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **MORAL MONDAY COMES TO GEORGIA**

### ***NAACP Leads Coalition to Expand Medicaid in Georgia***

(Atlanta, Georgia) – The Georgia State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (Georgia NAACP) announces the Moral Monday Movement is coming to Georgia. Georgia NAACP President Francys Johnson, a Civil Rights Attorney and Pastor from Statesboro, Georgia, confirmed the Georgia NAACP's leadership of a broad based coalition of religious, civic, human and civil rights organizations along with organized labor joining forces to pressure Gov. Nathan Deal and the General Assembly to accept billions of federal dollars to expand Medicaid.

"Georgia is home to the fifth largest uninsured population in the country – nearly 2 million Georgians lack health coverage. Half of all Georgia's working age adults below 138 percent of the poverty level – \$15,000 for an individual or \$26,000 for a family of three – go without health coverage. Gov. Deal purely partisan opposition to expansion is based on an irrational fear of his right-wing base who oppose implementing the Affordable Care Act. To leave 650,000 Georgians without healthcare when it's available to prove a point is a moral outrage!" said State President Francys Johnson. Johnson added, "The Coalition is borrowing a page from our colleagues in North Carolina. The Rev. William Barber, who leads the North Carolina NAACP and the Moral Monday Movement, has mentored our efforts and I believe there are Georgians are every hue and every political persuasion who are ready to put people over politics"

Georgia NAACP along with a growing list of doctors and health and human service organizations along with fiscal conservatives are part of an ever-growing chorus calling on Gov. Deal to drop his political opposition to expanding Georgia's Medicaid public health problem as a component of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Expanding Georgia's Medicaid public health program would extend coverage to an estimated 650,000 low-income Georgians, including many single adults. The program currently covers mostly children, pregnant women, the elderly and the disabled. Without an expansion, advocates argue, a large number of Georgians will continue to go without insurance, creating higher costs for patients who can pay in the form of increased insurance premiums and hospital bills.

"The Governor's opposition is political but I would urge Gov. Deal to look to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who is often mentioned as a White House hopeful in 2016, and others who have potentially difficult re-elections next year, such as Ohio Gov. John Kasich and Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder." stated Johnson.

Research at the Harvard School of Public Health suggests that the refusal of federal Medicaid funds may result in the deaths of 27,452 Americans in 2014 as those states ensure that mortality rates for low-income adults remain at a significantly higher level, according to the report. According to the Georgia Hospital Association, which represents 174 hospitals across Georgia, rejecting Medicaid expansion is destabilizing hospitals. Three hospitals have closed since the beginning of the year and as many as seven more hospitals are in danger.

"The think tanks, doctors, and business leaders have all urged Gov. Deal to expand but his office insists the state can't afford it. Our coalition is here to raise the moral question and remind the Governor of the costs to the conscious. What Georgia does to the least among us is the true measure of the content of our character as a state." Johnson said.

Founded in 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. The Georgia NAACP has had an unbroken presence in Georgia since 1917. The Georgia NAACP maintains a network of branches throughout Georgia, from cities to small rural counties. The Georgia NAACP has been the most effective and consistent advocates for civil and human rights in Georgia. The NAACP's half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors. ###