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### **Senate Republican Leaders Support Medicaid Expansion**

(Henderson, NV) -- Senate Republican leaders today commended Gov. Brian Sandoval's decision to expand the state Medicaid program as a commitment to the health of all Nevadans and a boost for a critical sector of the state's economy.

"Ensuring that poor Nevadans have access to primary health care through Medicaid is very simply the right thing to do, both for our citizens and our economy," said Sen. Michael Roberson, R-Henderson. "It will reduce our rate of uninsured and provide individuals with greater economic security."

"Nevada's health care indicators continually trail its neighboring states and regularly rank among the worst in the nation," said Sen. Ben Kieckhefer, R-Reno. "Expanding Medicaid to poor childless adults will help address this."

"Nevada has higher-than-average rates of such things as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and asthma," Kieckhefer said. "Access to primary health care is critical to both prevention and treatment of these diseases and conditions. Our citizens deserve this."

Sen. Joe Hardy, R-Boulder City, said expanding the program will allow Nevada to improve its return on federal tax dollars and ensure that money is reinvested into Nevada's health care economy, which is in need of a boost.

"Fully implementing health care reform is expected to boost Nevada's economy by up to \$6.2 billion over the next six years," Hardy said. "Medicaid expansion could also result in the creation of up to 8,600 much-needed jobs in Nevada over that time. With the low state match over this period, that's a solid return on investment."

All three Republican Senate leaders said they look forward to working with their colleagues during the 2013 session to approve this expansion, but also believe it's imperative that Nevada protect its economic future and require a sunset on the expansion should federal reimbursement rates drop below 90% for this population.

In addition, Republican Senate leadership supports the Governor's proposal to include a cost-sharing component in Medicaid and plans to pursue that initiative during the 2013 Legislative Session.

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