

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Tuesday, September 12, 2017

CONTACT: Mike Owen or Peter Fisher, (319) 338-0773, mikeowen@iowapolicyproject.org.

Iowa health coverage expands with Affordable Care Act

New census data show sharp 3-year decline in uninsurance in state

IOWA CITY, Iowa (Sept. 12, 2017) — New data from the Census Bureau show more Iowans had access to health insurance, chopping uninsurance by nearly half in just three years.

“This is the latest illustration of how the Affordable Care Act extended access to health care in our state, part of its impact in increasing coverage for millions nationwide,” said Peter Fisher, research director of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project (IPP).

“This clear impact should be central to any discussion of changes in the health-care law, or of plans to undermine Medicaid.”

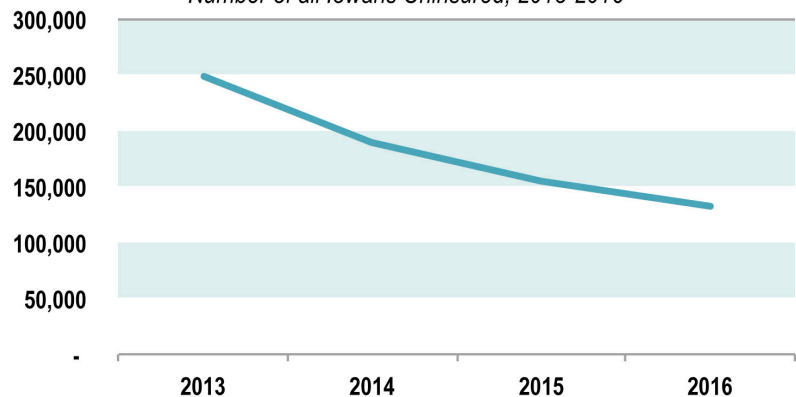
According to the Census, the American Community Survey found that:

- Iowa’s uninsurance rate fell steadily from 8.1 percent in 2013 to 4.3 percent in 2016.
- The number of Iowa uninsured fell from 248,000 in 2013 to 132,000 in 2016 — a 47 percent drop.
- Uninsurance among children dropped from 4.4 percent in 2013 to 2.6 percent in 2016.
- Uninsurance among all non-elderly Iowans (those under age 65), fell from 9.5 percent in 2013 to 5 percent in 2016.

The data came from an annual release by the Census Bureau, which showed that uninsurance nationally declined by nearly 18 million people from 2013 to 2016.

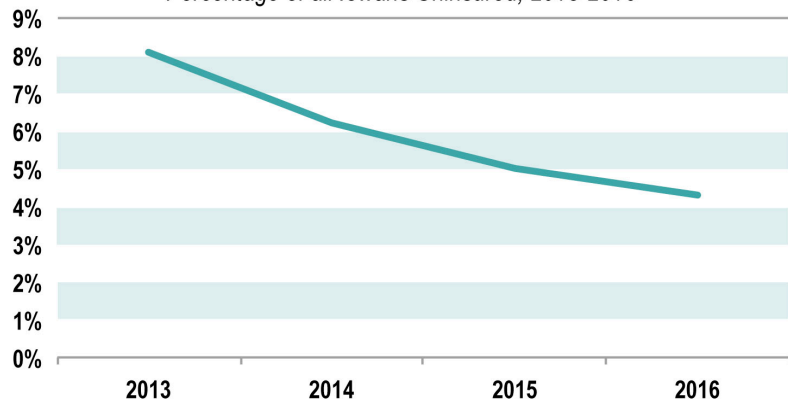
Number of Iowa Uninsured Drops Nearly Half in Three Years

Number of all Iowans Uninsured, 2013-2016



Iowa Uninsured Rate Dropping

Percentage of all Iowans Uninsured, 2013-2016



Iowa Fiscal Partnership

Source: American Community Survey

“It is indisputable that this enhanced access to health care makes it more likely that Iowans can get the health care they need for themselves and their children,” said Anne Discher, interim executive director of the Child & Family Policy Center (CFPC) in Des Moines.

“For children, the increased access to insurance is similar to that of the Iowa population as a whole,” Discher added, noting the number of Iowa children uninsured dropped from 34,000 in 2013 to 20,000 in 2016.

The decline in uninsurance among all non-elderly Iowans was 115,000 — from 246,000 in 2013 to 131,000 in 2016.

Fisher has reported for the Iowa Fiscal Partnership, a joint project of IPP and CFPC, about proposals in Congress — thus far unsuccessful — to repeal and replace the ACA, or Obamacare.

The repeal proposals all would result in a loss of coverage for significant numbers of Iowans, including beneficiaries of the Medicaid expansion that has extended coverage to many working families who otherwise could not afford insurance, and to seniors on Medicaid. In addition, the changes would result in higher premiums and expensive cost-shifts to states that already are facing strapped budgets, including Iowa.

#