

LEADERS URGE MEDICAID EXPANSION



State Reps. Naomi Gonzalez and Joe Moody, both D-El Paso, along with other state and local leaders, urge Gov. Rick Perry to accept **Medicaid** expansion for Texas during a news conference Saturday at the El Paso County Courthouse. Perry has turned down \$100 billion of additional federal money over the next decade by resisting **Medicaid** expansion under the federal government's Affordable Care Act. [Mark Lambie: *El Paso Times*]

Groups rally for Medicaid expansion

By Hayley Kappes

EL PASO TIMES

State and local officials and members of community groups gathered in front of the El Paso County Courthouse Saturday to urge Gov. Rick Perry to accept billions of federal dollars by expanding the number of Texans who receive **Medicaid**.

Perry has turned down \$100 billion of additional federal money over the next decade by resisting the push to expand **Medicaid** under the federal government's Affordable Care Act.

Elected officials and members of Border Interfaith and the El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Organization joined the CEOs of University Medical Center and Del Sol Medical Center to push for expanded **Medicaid** coverage to insure 1.5 million uninsured Texans, including about 135,000 El Pasoans.

"El Paso has a long history of having to deal with a population that has a high rate of uninsured folks who visit our emergency rooms for primary care," El Paso County Judge Veronica Escobar said. "We have private doctors and hospitals who have to deal on an everyday basis with the fact that we have a state that doesn't adequately cover our **Medicaid** population."

Lucy Nashed, a deputy press secretary for the governor, in an email said Perry is against a **Medicaid** expansion under Obamacare, but is interested in flexibility from the federal government "to address the challenges in the current broken **Medicaid** system."

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