

## AB 2965 (Arambula) - Health4All Young Adults

California's uninsured rate is at a historic low of 6.8% thanks to our robust implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which has brought health coverage to an additional 7 million Californians. In 2015, California made a critical investment to provide comprehensive full-scope Medi-Cal to all children (**Health4All Kids**), regardless of where they were born. Unfortunately, federal law explicitly and unjustly excludes undocumented immigrants from receiving health coverage through Medi-Cal, and from selecting a health plan or receiving subsidies for Covered California. As a result, undocumented adults are still left without comprehensive health care.

**AB 2965 (Arambula) removes an eligibility barrier to full-scope Medi-Cal for low-income undocumented young adults ages 19-25.** This investment builds on the gains California has made and takes the Golden State one step closer to universal coverage. Ensuring that all low-income elders and young adults have access to health care, regardless of their immigration status, is a key part of any strategy to reach this goal. California is stronger when everyone has access to health care. We're all in this together, and we're all healthier when all are covered.

**AB 2965 would make full-scope Medi-Cal available for income-eligible undocumented Californians between the ages of 19 to 25 by removing immigration status as an exclusionary barrier.**

### Health4All Young Adults



“ I DIDN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT 'UNDOCUMENTED' MEANT UNTIL MY MOM SAID, 'WE DON'T QUALIFY FOR HEALTH CARE.' ”

- KAREN  
SAN DIEGO, CA

Removing immigration exclusions to Medi-Cal for young adult Californians is a critical step forward towards universal coverage. Undocumented young adult Californians face the barriers of not having health care while also caring for their aging parents who have struggled to provide for their children but also lack health care as they age. Young Californians' exclusion from health care can result in easily treatable conditions becoming life-threatening and entire families facing an increased risk of medical debt that disrupts the financial well-being of their household.

Research indicates that just living in the United States with undocumented status could be wreaking havoc on the mental health of hundreds of thousands of immigrants.

This proposal ensures that full-scope Medi-Cal continues to be available to low-income young adults as they age out of eligibility through **Health4All Kids**. Californians' well-being counts on routine care, prescriptions for health conditions, and vital follow-up care that reduce the cost of undiagnosed chronic illness and prevent treatable conditions from becoming life threatening emergencies.

Including Californians in our health system, including undocumented immigrants who are our fellow students, neighbors, parents, community members, and colleagues is essential to growing a strong economy and building a vibrant and inclusive California.

### Health4All Young Adults Moves California Closer to Universal Coverage

Over the last year, we have witnessed a barrage of attacks on health care at the federal level, including multiple efforts to repeal the ACA, the elimination of the individual mandate penalty in the federal tax bill, and various administrative actions that undermine access to care. California has worked to shield our state from these attacks to the extent possible.

California must continue to champion bold and inclusive policies that support the health of our communities and work against xenophobic federal policies. **Of the nearly 3 million Californians who remain uninsured, 58% are undocumented adults.**<sup>i</sup> AB 2965 removes a barrier to health access due to immigration status for all young adults and brings California closer to ensuring that every Californian has comprehensive, affordable, and accessible care.

California already provides near-universal coverage for children, thanks in large part to the Health4All Kids program, which was implemented on May 16, 2016. The 2015-16 state budget ([SB 75](#)) included an investment to expand full-scope Medi-Cal to all low-income children under the age of 19, regardless of immigration status. **Under the implementation of Health4All Kids, over 218,000 undocumented children have received comprehensive care.**<sup>ii</sup> This expansion was possible thanks to the efforts of directly impacted individuals, advocates, and legislative leaders. **AB 2965 (Arambula) brings our state closer to universal coverage by building on the success of Health4All Kids by ensuring that full-scope Medi-Cal is available to all low-income undocumented young adults ages 19-25.**

### The Impact of Being Uninsured & Undocumented



Undocumented and uninsured Californians live sicker, die younger, and are one emergency away from financial ruin because they lack access to comprehensive health coverage. Under current law, low-income undocumented adults are eligible for emergency-only Medi-Cal but not for primary or preventive care offered through full-scope Medi-Cal. Though some California counties provide some care to undocumented adults through their safety-net systems, many do not.<sup>iii</sup> **This reality has tremendous health and economic impacts on families and our state where 1 in 6 of all California children have at least one undocumented parent.**<sup>iv</sup> Our health care system works better when all California residents, regardless of immigration status, have access to health care.

### Key Points

- **Medi-Cal for low-income undocumented young adults builds on the success of Health4All Kids** and strengthens our state by ensuring that every young Californian has access to health care.
- **AB 2965 continues California's well-established tradition of covering immigrant populations in Medi-Cal** who are excluded from federal programs.<sup>v</sup>
- **No one should suffer or die from a treatable condition because of where they were born.** Our health care system is stronger and more cost-efficient when we detect and treat preventable conditions early, rather than force patients to resort to the emergency room for care.

### For more information:

*Christopher Galeano, Legislative Advocate, California Immigrant Policy Center:* [cgaleano@caimmigrant.org](mailto:cgaleano@caimmigrant.org).  
*Myri Valdez, Legislative and Policy Advocate, Health Access California:* [mvaldez@health-access.org](mailto:mvaldez@health-access.org).

<sup>i</sup> [http://www.itup.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Remaining-Uninsured\\_Fact-Sheet-11-21-17.pdf](http://www.itup.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Remaining-Uninsured_Fact-Sheet-11-21-17.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Department of Health Care Services. (2017). SB 75 Transitions and New Enrollees by County. Retrieved from: [http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/eligibility/Documents/SB75/SB75\\_Enrollees\\_County\\_120417.pdf](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/eligibility/Documents/SB75/SB75_Enrollees_County_120417.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Health Access California, Re-Orienting the Safety Net for the Remaining Uninsured, March, 2015. [http://www.health-access.org/images/pdfs/county\\_safety\\_net\\_survey\\_reportupdate\\_march15final.pdf](http://www.health-access.org/images/pdfs/county_safety_net_survey_reportupdate_march15final.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> <http://dornsife.usc.edu/csii/undocumentedca/>

<sup>v</sup> California has provided health coverage to newly qualified immigrants (green card holders in the U.S. for less than five years) and immigrants with deferred action status (such as DACA recipients).