

OPPOSES GUN SAFETY

In 2018, six days after the Parkland shooting, House Republicans rejected a motion by Democrats to debate an assault weapons ban. Like all other Republicans present, the Pinellas Republicans voted NO on the Democrats' motion

VOTED NO - James Grant (R), Chris Latvala (R), Chris Sprowls (R)

In August of 2019, after the mass shootings in El Paso, TX and Dayton, OH, Democrats forced a vote on whether or not to convene a special session so the legislature could consider background checks for all firearm sales, bans on largecapacity magazines, and other mechanisms to address gun violence. The effort failed.

VOTED NO - James Grant (R), Nick DiCeglie (R), Chris Latvala (R), Chris Sprowls (R)

STAND YOUR GROUND 2017 SB 128

Shifts burden of proof in "stand your ground" cases from shooter to party trying to overcome immunity defense.

VOTED YES Chris Sprowls (R), James Grant (R), Chris Latvala (R)

2019 SB 7030 ARMING TEACHERS

VOTED YES - James Grant (R), Nick DiCeglie (R), Chris Latvala (R), Chris Sprowls (R)

2018 SB 7026 Arming School Personnel Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act

Created a "guardian" program that allows school personnel to be armed VOTED YES Chris Latvala (R), Chris Sprowls (R)

VOTED AGAINST THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE OF FLORIDA

Pinellas Republicans voted YES to make it harder to get amendments on the ballot, while Pinellas Democrats voted NO. VOTED YES - James Grant (R), Nick DiCeglie (R), Chris Latvala (R), Chris Sprowls (R)

Report attributes nearly 2,800 premature deaths of low-income seniors to FL decision not to expand Medicaid

By
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-
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Wikimedia Commons photo

More low-income seniors may be dying in Florida because of the state's refusal to expand Medicaid under the federal Affordable Care Act, a new study shows.

A [report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(CBPP\)](#) shows that 2,776 low-income seniors in Florida may have died prematurely between 2014 and 2017 because of the lack of health-care coverage.

Florida had the second-highest premature death rate among the states that have not expanded Medicaid, the state-federal health care program for the poor and disabled, the report shows. Texas had the most premature deaths at 2,920.

Nationally, the report estimates 15,600 adults between the ages of 55 and 64 may have died prematurely between 2014 and 2017 because of the lack of health care coverage in the states that did not expand Medicaid.

Florida and Texas are among the 17 states that have either not expanded Medicaid under the federal health-care law or have voted to expand the program but have not yet implemented it.

Conversely, the report estimates 19,200 low-income seniors may have avoided a premature death in the 33 states that expanded Medicaid.

The CBPP report is based on [the work of researchers](#) at the University of Michigan, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Census Bureau and the University of California Los Angeles.

The report notes the research is “consistent with a large body of research that has already documented that Medicaid expansion improves access to care and health outcomes.”

“For example, research shows that Medicaid expansion increased the share of low-income adults using medications to control chronic conditions like heart disease and diabetes,” the report said. “The new study finds particularly clear evidence of a drop in mortality from conditions like these, which are amenable to medication and other treatment.”

Democrats in the Florida Legislature support expanding Medicaid in Florida. But the Republican leadership in the Legislature and Gov. Ron DeSantis remain opposed, meaning it is not likely to happen in the 2020 session that begins in January.

“This new evidence that thousands of lives are at stake should give states that have not yet expanded Medicaid one more reason to do so,” the report said. “On top of the already well-documented gains in access to care and financial security, the new study shows that gaining Medicaid coverage is literally a matter of life and death, particularly for people with serious health needs.”

Chis Sprowls

In 2014, incumbent [State Representative Carl Zimmermann](#), a Democrat, ran for re-election in the 65th District, so Sprowls ran against him. He faced fellow attorney Debbie Ann Faulkner in the [Republican](#) primary. The [Tampa Tribune](#) endorsed Sprowls over Faulkner, which noted that, though “both candidates bring intelligence and passion to the race,” Sprowls “is the more polished candidate and appears ready to serve on day one if elected.”^[4] Sprowls ended up defeating Faulkner by a wide margin, winning 65% of the vote, and advanced to the general election, where he faced Zimmermann. He campaigned on his opposition to Medicaid expansion provided for under the [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act](#),^[5] his support for charter schools and accountability for them, and his pro-life positions.^[6] Ultimately, owing to the tendency of the district

to vote for [Republican](#) candidates,^[7] Spowls unseated Zimmermann, winning his first term in the legislature with 52% of the vote.