



**For Immediate Release**

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**120,500 Rhode Islanders under 65 Lacked Health Insurance in 2011**  
***Number of Uninsured Unchanged***

**PROVIDENCE, RI (September 12, 2012).** The share of Rhode Islanders under age 65 without health insurance remained essentially the same last year, according to Census Bureau figures released today. In Rhode Island, 120,500 (13.6%) of non-elderly individuals did not have health insurance in 2010/2011. This was the highest rate of uninsurance in New England.

Nationally, 48.6 million people (15.7 percent) had no health insurance in 2011, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points, the largest single year decline since 1999. Experts at the national level credit, in part, the provision that allows young adults to remain on their parent's health insurance until they turn 26 for the decrease in the number of uninsured. It is estimated that 9,000 young Rhode Islanders have coverage as a result of this provision.

The data released today also show that 557,300 (63 percent) of Rhode Islanders had coverage through their jobs in 2010-2011 and 171,200 (19.3 percent) were insured through the Medicaid Program. The majority of these Medicaid enrollees are parents and children who are covered through the Rite Care/Rite Share program. With Rhode Island's double-digit unemployment rate continuing to be one of the highest in the nation, this program plays a vital role in ensuring access to quality health care for families.

Beginning in January 2014, with the full implementation of the Affordable Care Act, many more Rhode Islanders will have access to affordable health insurance. Single adults will be eligible for Medicaid coverage if income is less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level (\$20,000/year). Rhode Island is on track to expand coverage to this needy population, with full funding from the federal government in the first years of coverage. Individuals and families who are ineligible for Medicaid and have income less than four times the federal poverty level will have access to subsidies to help purchase private health insurance through the newly created Health Insurance Exchange.

"We know that uninsured individuals have a harder time accessing care, have poorer health outcomes and a harder time paying for basic necessities because of medical bills," said Linda Katz,

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Policy Director at the Economic Progress Institute. “We can be proud that in our state there is strong public support for using the opportunities provided by the Affordable Care Act to provide health coverage and access to health care to more of our neighbors.”

**About the data**

The data is taken from the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS), released today. The Census recommends using 2-year averages for state level data because of small sample sizes. For more information see [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

**About The Economic Progress Institute**

The Economic Progress Institute - formerly The Poverty Institute - is a nonpartisan research and policy organization dedicated to improving the economic well-being of low- and modest-income Rhode Islanders. For more information visit [www.economicprogressri.org](http://www.economicprogressri.org).

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