Ballot measures to expand Medicaid eligibility in Idaho, Nebraska and Utah passed in the mid-term elections. Montana voters rejected a measure to continue the expansion in their state.

In Idaho, according to the Idaho Statesman [2], 60 percent of voters approve the Prop 2 measure, which is estimated will provide access to healthcare for 62,000 Idahoans.

Initiative 427, approved by 53 percent of Nebraska voters statewide, will bring health insurance coverage by Medicaid to 90,000 Nebraskans, according to the Omaha World-Herald [3]. The initiative requires that the state file all the necessary paperwork with the federal government by April 1, 2019.

In Utah, the Medicaid expansion ballot initiative will cover an estimated 150,000 low-income Utahns. The measure passed with 54.1 percent approving the expansion and a sales tax increase from 4.7 percent to 4.85 percent to finance the expansion, the Deseret News reported [4]. The tax increase should raise $91 million which will trigger more than $800 in matching federal funds.

Montana voters rejected a measure to raise the state’s cigarette tax to $3.70 per pack and create a new tax on vaping products to provide funding to continue the state’s Medicaid expansion. Unless the program is renewed by the legislature in 2019, 96,000 people could lose Medicaid coverage, according to the Billings Gazette [5]. The original expansion was a result of compromise legislation supported by Democratic Gov. Bullock and the Republican-majority legislature.

Maine voters had approved a Medicaid ballot initiative in 2017, but current Maine Gov. LePage has blocked implementation of the measure. Janet Mills, the newly elected governor, has vowed to make expanding Medicaid one of her top priorities, the Associated Press reported. [6]

With these new states mandated to toward Medicaid expansion, the total of states (and D.C.) adopting expansion moves to 37. Ten of the 14 states not adopting expansion are in the south.

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