



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** September 15, 2020

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Juan Espinoza, Economic Progress Institute

[jespinoza@economicprogressri.org](mailto:jespinoza@economicprogressri.org); 401-456-2752(office); 813-526-3043(cell)

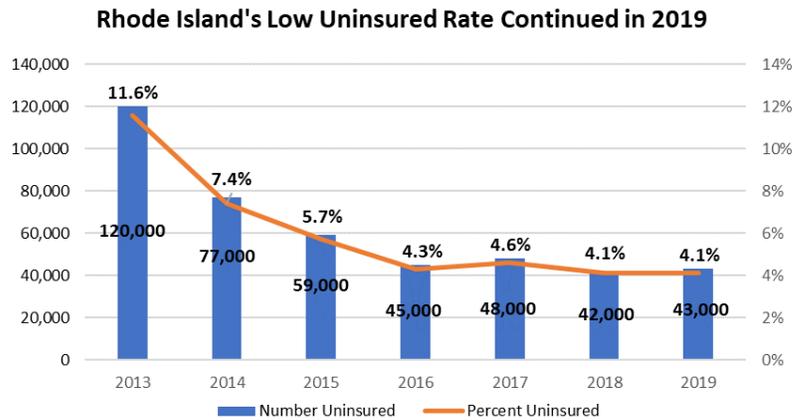
## Rhode Island's Low Uninsured Rate Continued in 2019

*For 2020, the federal government must act so Medicaid coverage mitigates loss of employer coverage during COVID and to shore up state budgets*

**Providence, RI** — New data released by the Census Bureau today show that in 2019, there were 43,000 Rhode Islanders (4.1%) who lacked health insurance. This is essentially the same rate as in the previous year but less than half the rate in 2013 before the Affordable Care Act went into effect. Rhode Island ranks as the 3<sup>rd</sup> best state in the nation for coverage of its residents.

The 2019 data do not reflect the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on health insurance coverage. According to the Census Bureau, in 2019 60.7% of Rhode Islanders had employer-based health insurance. The significant job and income losses due to COVID-19 over the last 6 months may also have resulted in loss of health insurance, but the availability of Medicaid may have helped mitigate the loss of coverage.

From February 2020 to August 2020, overall enrollment in Medicaid increased by 6.9%, with enrollment of the expansion population rising from 73,140 to 84,799 (15.9%) and for children and families from 165,967 to 174,082 (4.9%). These numbers include several thousand newly enrolling individuals as well as those who remained eligible under the federal requirement that states provide continuous coverage to enrollees during the COVID-19 emergency for the state to receive the enhanced federal match (FMAP) for Medicaid spending. Continuous coverage ensures that Rhode Islanders will not needlessly lose vital health insurance coverage, and the enhanced FMAP is providing our state with an additional \$83.2 million in federal funds this year.



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, Table HIC-4. Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State All Persons: 2008 to 2019.

State	Percent Uninsured (2019)	Total Uninsured (2019)	U.S. Ranking Lowest Rate Uninsured (2019)
United States	9.2%	29,639,000	
Massachusetts	3.0%	204,000	1
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>43,000</b>	<b>3</b>
Vermont	4.5%	28,000	5
Connecticut	5.9%	207,000	12
New Hampshire	6.3%	84,000	14
Maine	8.0%	107,000	27

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, Table HIC-4. Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State All Persons: 2008 to 2019.

“The Affordable Care Act opened the door to Medicaid insurance for 75,000 low-income single adults and allowed 34,000 Rhode Islanders to buy coverage through HealthSource RI” said Linda Katz, the Economic Progress Institute’s Policy Director. “It is even more important in this time of health crisis that these public programs remain strong. It is critical that the federal government move rapidly to provide relief to states, including continuing and even increasing the enhanced FMAP. Without swift and comprehensive federal action, residents and the state’s economy will suffer.”

###

**About The Economic Progress Institute:** The Economic Progress 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).