Thousands of Georgians are stuck without any affordable options for health insurance because state leaders repeatedly reject billions of dollars meant to pay for coverage. About 240,000 workers, students, veterans and other Georgians make too little to get financial help to buy health insurance and do not currently qualify for Medicaid. The majority of these Georgians are working in low-wage jobs where they are not offered health benefits.

Every year state lawmakers fail to expand Medicaid, our state loses $3 billion meant to put a health insurance card in more Georgians’ pockets. For every $1 Georgia invests, we could receive $9 more from the federal government for health care.

Meanwhile, six rural Georgia hospitals have closed since 2013, and several more are struggling to serve a high number of patients who lack health coverage. One out of every four rural Georgians will not carry health insurance by 2026, according to the Georgia Chamber of Commerce. Now is the time for state lawmakers to act.