Decisive victory for Kansans in Supreme Court ruling

70,000 Kansans will keep their health insurance as a result of a long-awaited US Supreme Court decision this morning. The Court handed down a 6-3 ruling in the King v Burwell case, which asked whether the Affordable Care Act was intended to offer subsidies to people who qualify, but live in states that have a federal exchange.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides subsidies for low-income people to purchase health insurance policies in an exchange. The law assumed most states would have their own exchanges, but 34 states, including Kansas, use the federal exchange. The King v Burwell case examined the ACA language and intent about this critical issue. In Kansas, 69,979 people used subsidies to purchase health insurance through the federal exchange. This translates to nearly $15 million dollars invested in our state’s economy each month to help cover the cost of Kansans’ health insurance. If the law had been overturned, the nearly 70,000 Kansans would have seen monthly premium increases of up to 231% each. The vast majority of these Kansans were uninsured prior to implementation of the ACA and the availability of the premium subsidies.

The decisive margin in the Burwell case indicates the Court
believes the intent of the ACA is that all people who are eligible should have access to subsidies to make the insurance affordable. The majority opinion stated in part, "Congress passed the Affordable care Act to improve health insurance markets, not to destroy them."

Early this week, a group of Kansas Republic lawmakers wrote a letter to Republican Congressional members asking them to repeal much of the ACA if the US Supreme Court struck down the subsidies.

Kansas lawmakers and Governor Brownback have remained resolute in their position to not expand the Medicaid program known as KanCare. The ACA allows states to expand their Medicaid programs to low-income adults whose incomes are too low to qualify for the premium subsidies. Oral Health Kansas joined scores of health advocacy organizations this year in providing testimony to the Legislature about the need to expand KanCare. Expanding KanCare would ensure low-income Kansans would have access to both health and dental care.

Call to Action
The Supreme Court has made it clear that the ACA remains the law of the land and remains our country's best way to ensure all people have access to affordable health insurance. Please
contact Governor Brownback and your legislators to let them know you support KanCare Expansion and want to see low-income adults have access to life-saving health and dental care.