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**To:** [Press](#)  
**Subject:** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Senator Shevrin Jones and Representative Nicholas Duran File Bill to Expand Floridians' Access to Health Care  
**Date:** Friday, January 22, 2021 12:04:17 PM

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 22, 2021

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## **Senator Shevrin Jones and Representative Nicholas Duran File Bill to Expand Floridians' Access to Health Care**

**Tallahassee, FL** – Today, **Senator Shevrin Jones (D–West Park)** and **Representative Nicholas Duran (D–Miami)** filed [SB 698](#) and [HB 341](#), counterpart bills in the Senate and House, respectively, focused on expanding health care access for low-income Floridians.

The bill will:

- expand health care affordability and access for nearly 850,000 Floridians;
- bring \$14.3 billion in new federal dollars to the state from 2020 to 2024;
- save Florida in the range of \$198.9 million annually to \$385 million over a five-year period.

Today, Florida ranks near the bottom of all states in terms of health access and affordability. As a result, millions of Floridians lack health coverage due to high premium costs and choose to forgo medical treatment when they are hurt or sick.

The coronavirus pandemic has only added severe economic uncertainty as many people lose their jobs, and as a result, their insurance, as well as a steep decline in state revenue. Experts [project](#) that expanding access to care for uninsured and underinsured Floridians could in fact reduce state costs for uncompensated care, boost economic activity and state revenues, and create budget savings that can go towards other key priorities.

“Rather than cutting critical services in the midst of a public health crisis, we must make smart investments in our people because it's the fiscally, and morally,

responsible thing to do,” said **Sen. Shevrin Jones**. “The pandemic has shone a spotlight on why health care and treatment shouldn’t be tethered to employment status. We need to make sure that there are less — not more— barriers so that every Floridian can get the quality, accessible, and affordable health care they need to keep our communities safe and healthy.”

“Drawing down new federal Medicaid funds will be one of the fastest, proven-effective ways to deliver fiscal relief to Florida's economy during this economic downturn,” said **Rep. Nicholas Duran**. “The new federal dollars will directly impact the healthcare care community, its vendors and its employees, but its economic ripples will go beyond the healthcare sector indirectly impacting small businesses, restaurants, gyms, personal and business services, and state and local governments.”

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