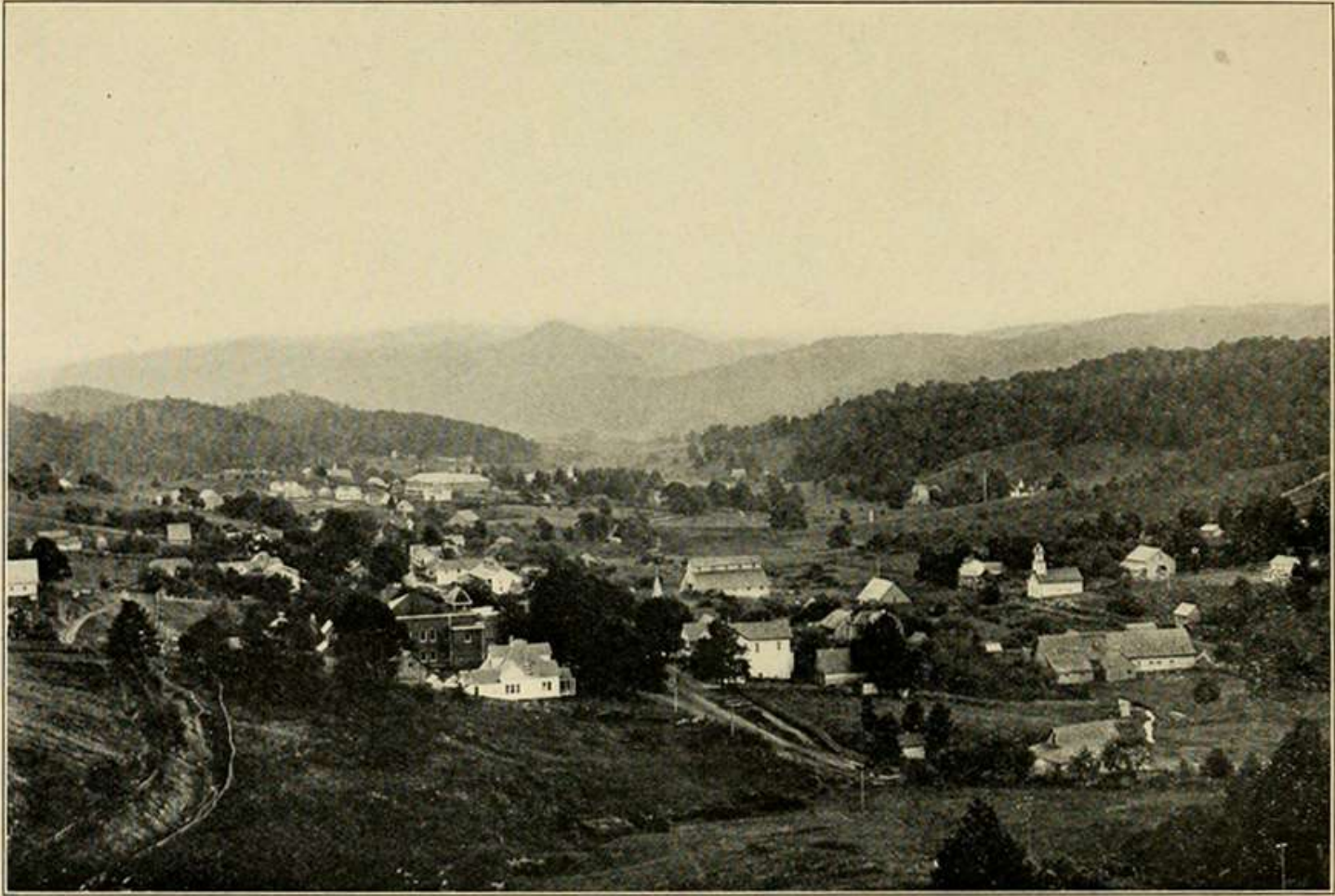


# The History of Nursing in Watauga County

Presented at

Democratic Women's Club of Watauga County, NC  
Watauga County Historical Society  
Watauga County Public Library



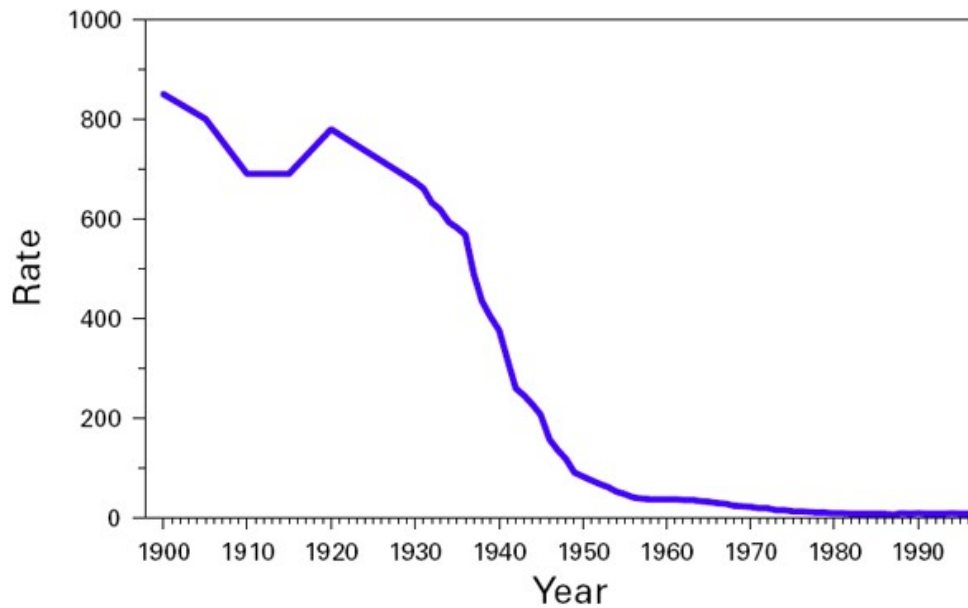
BOONE, THE COUNTY SEAT OF WATAUGA, 1915.





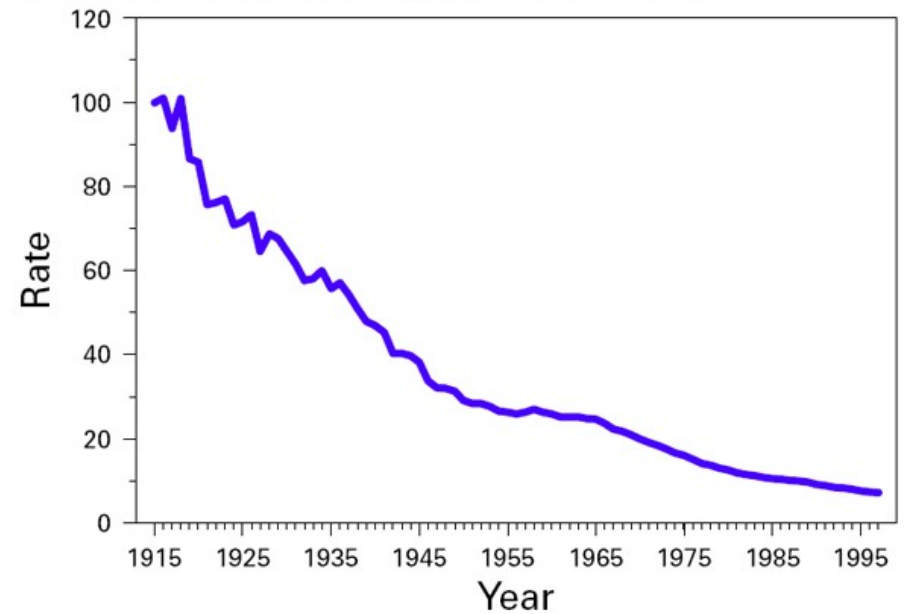
# Maternal and infant mortality rates 1900-1997

FIGURE 2. Maternal mortality rate,\* by year — United States, 1900-1997



\*Per 100,000 live births.

FIGURE 1. Infant mortality rate,\* by year — United States, 1915-1997



\*Per 1000 live births.



Much of the high country did not get electricity until the late 1940s so surgery and dental work were often performed outside



# Grace Hospital (Tate Dorm), Banner Elk, NC established 1920



Dr. R.K. Bingham's patients could stay over night in his home when they needed care, 1920s (Daniel Boone Inn)







1918-1920  
School children inspections



School nurse examining a student's vision in an undisclosed school building in North Carolina circa 1920.

(Courtesy of the North Carolina State Archives, PhC41.202.3)



**—SPANISH INFLUENZA** is in Watauga, and all steps possible will be taken to avoid the spread of the disease. Meetings of all sorts are forbidden, even Sunday School and church services in the village are being called off, and steps are being taken to discontinue the public schools of the county. The Training School will be put under quarantine, if it continues. Avoid crowds of all kinds, is the slogan.

2  
GREENSBORO DAILY NEWS, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1918

## Wanted! Physicians and Nurses

At Once to Aid In the Fight in North Carolina Against Influenza

The Situation In the State Is Serious  
Many People Are Dying for Lack of Attention  
Many Communities Are Wholly Without Physicians and Nurses

In many other communities medical and nursing attention is wholly inadequate to meet the need.  
To save human life there must be immediate response on the part of physicians and nurses who can possibly be spared from their home community for relief work.

Nurses will be paid \$5 per day and expenses. In volunteering for this duty use either telegraph or telephone collect and give the following information: age, training school, graduation year, whether registered nurse or licensed in North Carolina, and earliest possible date available for duty.

Physicians will be paid \$15 per day and expenses. Those answering this call use either telegraph or telephone collect and state earliest possible date available for service.

The emergency is so great that it is urged upon both physicians and nurses who volunteer for this duty that they be prepared to respond at once upon receipt of request to report for work.

Address, State Board of Health, Raleigh, N. C.

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<p><b>MARCH URGES SUPPORT OF THE LIBERTY LOAN</b></p> <p>Chief of Staff Says \$6,000,000, 600 in Back Arrows Is Absolutely Necessary</p>	<p><b>PLEA FOR AN ARMISTICE DISPLEASES SOME HUNTERS</b></p> <p>Provision Jockers Think Peace Offer Should Have Been Received in Name of Allies</p>	<p><b>SCOUTS START OUT ON WORK TO SELL BONDS</b></p> <p>Seven Troops Begin Campaign This Morning for Liberty Bond Subscriptions</p>	<p><b>NO PEACE NOTE FROM TURKEY YET RECEIVED</b></p> <p>State Department Has Nothing Official Concerning It—Would Cause an Surprise</p>
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would result on basis of meeting the largest number of the people, and the other advantages to be derived from the plan. The plan is to be carried into the past campaign actively, with the aid of the Liberty Loan Committee, and the results will be reported during the next Liberty Loan campaign.

month a person were assessed by full monthly allotment of two weeks in the Liberty Loan bond issue. The daily allotment in the new campaign will be \$100 in the case of those who have not yet received their allotment. The monthly allotment of any person who has received their allotment will continue the delivery of the Liberty Loan.

THOMASVILLE IN GRIP OF SPANISH INFLUENZA

ON TOP



The American Red Cross became the biggest employer of public health nurses in the country



A Red Cross Public Health Nurse drives the car through the stream because the bridge is unsafe.  
Appalachia, 1920.

In 1920, the Watauga County Chapter of the ARC brought the first PHN to our county – Stella McCartney Hagaman.



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### Watauga's Red Cross Nurse.

It is a pleasure to announce that Watauga now has at her employ, through the Red Cross and other mediums, a trained nurse, whose services will be free to the county at large, but, under ordinary conditions she cannot do

### ASSISTING IN COUNTY HEALTH CAMPAIGN.

Through the efforts of the County Nurse, Miss Stella McCartney, a clinic for the examination and diagnosis of persons suspected of having tuberculosis, is being held in the court house every day this week from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. Dr. Spruell, an expert diagnostician from the State

at Watauga, Miss Stella McCartney, Public Health Nurse for Watauga County, left Monday for Charlotte, where she will attend a nurses convention today. She was accompanied by Little Louise Critcher, who goes to the Charlotte Sanatorium to have her tonsils removed.

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Thursday, May 6, 1920.

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### Public Health Committee Meets.

The second meeting of the committee on Public Health in Watauga was held in the office of the Public Health Nurse last Monday. The attendance was good, and all seemed greatly interested in this move, which Mr. W. S. Whiting, chairman of the finance committee, in a most interesting talk, pronounced "the best ever made in or by the county." A



In McCartney's first year (1920-21) she made:

28 home visits that required 24 hours or more

102 home visits that required less than 24 hours

301 visits to pregnant women, and/or mothers of young children

229 "sanitary visits"

Visited 60 schools and with a state school nurse inspected 2,303 school children

Organized clinics for smallpox vaccine and TB testing

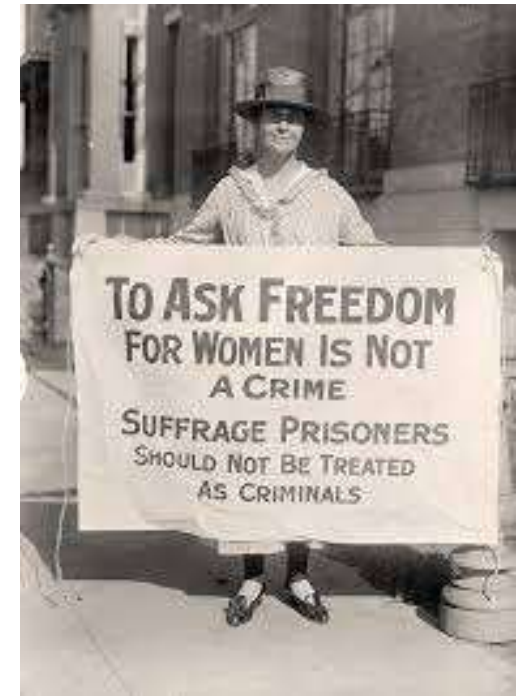
Occasionally acted as midwife and undertaker



# McCartney marries Smith Hagaman WD 10-6-1921)

A wedding of more than usual interest occurred yesterday when Mr. Smith Hagaman and Miss Stella McCartney were married, the ceremony being performed at Mountain City, Tennessee. The couple is widely known in this section, Mr. Hagaman being Superintendent of county schools, formerly a representative from this county in the Legislature, and always one

of Watauga's foremost men, while Miss McCartney has made a wide circle of friends during her sojourn here, and her untiring efforts and wonderful efficiency in the county's public health work have been a source of pride to all Wataugans. After a short bridal trip the couple will return to Boone, where they will probably make their future home.



August 20, 1920 the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment become law



Using their new voting power, women convinced an almost all male Congress to vote for the Shephard-Towner Act in 1921



- 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment passed on August 20, 1920
- Women's organizations first priority were maternal child health programs
- The House **passed** the S-T Act 279 to 39, and the Senate **passed** it 63 to 7 (bi-partisan).
- Republican President Warren Harding signed the legislation into law
- North Carolina had 94 S-T nurses

The Shepherd - Towner Acts funds provided:  
Health clinics for women and children  
Visiting nurses  
Health education efforts focused on nutrition and sanitation



## Midwives Are Given Certificates

Watauga county was fortunate in having Mrs. H. P. Guffy, public health nurse with the State Board of Health, to visit during the first two weeks of August for the purpose of instructing and inspecting the midwives, their equipment, and their records. Mrs. Guffy has been com-

## MRS. WAGNER RETIRES FROM MIDWIFE PRACTICE

Mrs. Sarah Wagoner of Deep Gap and Stony Fork communities, has been practicing as an approved midwife for 32 years and has rendered a great service to the communities in which she lived and worked. The total number of cases that she has attended follows: 315 deliveries

## Midwife training





The Shephard-Towner act was repealed 1929 due to political pressure

“Anti” Groups including the American Medical Association. Its Section on Pediatrics labeled the program "socialistic" and opposed its passage and opposed its funding in subsequent years. The Catholic Church also opposed it.

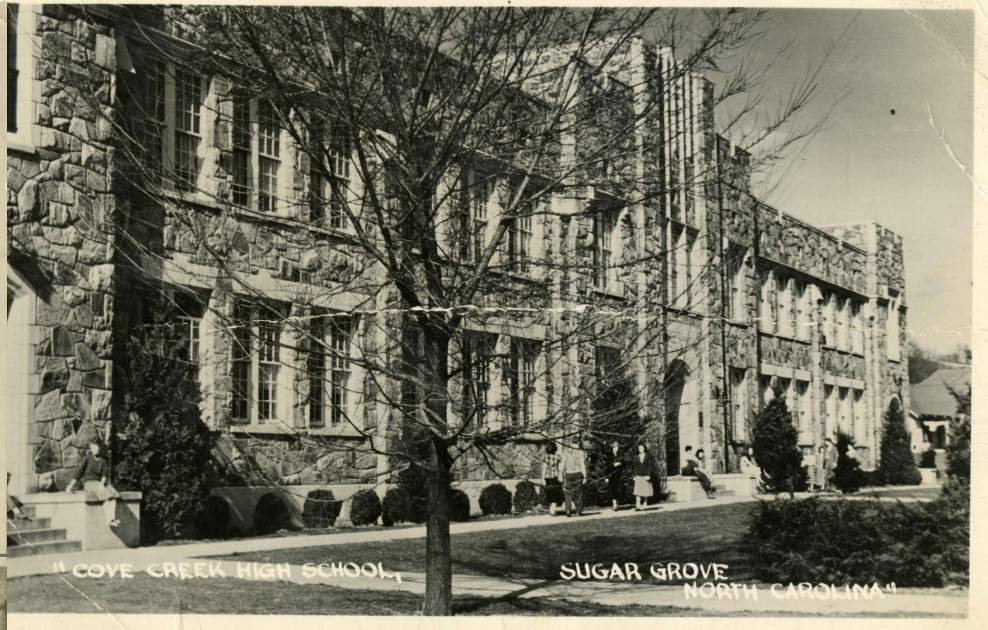
The Great  
Depression  
hit in 1929



1932 – There is still no modern hospital or health department in Boone or Watauga County. Like the local Red Cross chapter a decade earlier, the Lutheran Church Mission Board hired Amy Fisher, RN, to work in the church and in the community.









1932 - Democrat Franklin Roosevelt is elected president. He initiates many “New Deal” programs. On August 14, 1935, the Social Security Act established a system of old-age benefits for workers, benefits for victims of industrial accidents, unemployment insurance, aid for dependent mothers and children, the blind, and the physically handicapped.

# The SS Act passes easily with bi-partisan support

<b>HOUSE (4/19/35)</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Farm Labor</b>	<b>Progressive/Other</b>
<b>Yes</b>	284	81	1	6
<b>No</b>	15	15	2	1
<b>Not Voting</b>	20	4	0	1
<b>Present</b>	0	2	0	0

<b>SENATE (6/19/35)</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Farm Labor</b>	<b>Progressive</b>
<b>Yes</b>	60	16	1	0
<b>No</b>	1	5	0	0
<b>Not Voting</b>	8	4	0	0



In 1935, using Social Security Administration funds, Watauga County hired Nurse Fisher as its' first public health nurse.



Last year was the first year the health department has been in existence here and we tried to cover practically the whole county. Over five thousand people took the typhoid fever vaccine and one thousand six hundred and twenty-five babies and children were given diphtheria toxoid. The need is much too large for the individual physicians to cope with in this county, and that is why the health department does immunizations on such a large scale.

There are about fifty schools in the county, and we plan our schedule so that we may get to the most inaccessible ones before bad weather sets in. But even then we sometimes have to walk part of the way. We don't try to go to Lower Elk after a hard rain because you ford the creek twenty-two times and some of the fords are pretty deep.

# Show movie

[https://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675023109\\_Health-care-in-Appalachia\\_Nurse-Amy-Louise-Fisher\\_tooth-extraction\\_vaccination](https://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675023109_Health-care-in-Appalachia_Nurse-Amy-Louise-Fisher_tooth-extraction_vaccination)

Using some New Deal funds, Watauga County Hospital opened Easter Sunday, April 7, 1938. There were 37 beds, and 3 nurses. It is the first hospital in the county.

Mr. Smith Hagaman,  
husband of Stella  
McCartney Hagaman was  
the Chairman of the  
Hospital Board of  
Directors



1945 - Democratic President Harry Truman proposed a universal health insurance coverage plan, administered and paid for by a National Health Insurance Board. Opponents of the proposal, including the American Medical Association, decried it as "socialized medicine," and the bill died in Congress.

However, the Hospital Survey and Construction Act (commonly known as the Hill-Burton Act) was passed by Congress in 1946. The "new" WMC was built using some Hill Burton funding in 1968







All Votes	Democrats	Republicans
Yea 69%	299	180
Nay 3%	13	7
Present 27%	116	67
Not Voting 1%	4	2

*Democratic President John F. Kennedy signs the Community Mental Health Act into law on October 31, 1963.*

# New River Mental Health opens in mid 1960s using CMHA funds

North Carolina's  
**Itinerant**  
Psychiatrist

Where can a family physician turn for advice on treating patients with comparatively minor psychiatric disorders? Not to a psychiatrist, according to many doctors polled by Dr. Robert S. Garber a few years ago. (Psychiatric Reporter, January-February, 1963.) Such advice is hard to come by, especially for those who live far from large cities.

But the problem seems to have been solved by at least one rural area: the five counties of Allegheny, Avery, Burke, Caldwell, and Watauga in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina. There the population of 140,000 is served by 68 physicians, none of them psychiatrists. Sixty-four of them, however, are participating in a pilot project that, since 1964, has provided them with opportunities for psychiatric consultation most GP's can only dream of. And it's all free. Once or twice a month Dr. James L. Cahell, the state mental health department's Psychiatric Consultant to Local Physicians, visits each one to discuss any case he may be able to help with. (There have been nearly 2000 in the past two

Used by Permission, SK and F Psychiatric Reporter, published by Smith, Kline and French Laboratories.

**DEMOCRAT** Sect  
CAROLINA, THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1962

## Movement Is Started To Set Up Mental Health Group In County

Watauga's wealth is in the sound mental health of its people, might well be the slogan of the proposed mental health association.

Mrs. Lois E. Harrill, public health nurse, will contact local clubs and the elementary teachers.

Mrs. Ruth D. Baker, public welfare worker, accepted the responsibility of contacting local industrial leaders, members of the Bar Association and law enforcement officers. Mrs. Baker will also serve as temporary

1964 - Democrat Lyndon Johnson is elected President and starts “Great Society” programs including Medicare and Medicaid which pass Congress in 1965

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||

Democrats overwhelmingly support Medicare/Medicaid, Republicans are divided

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Summary of Party Affiliation on Medicare Vote			
SENATE	YEA	NAY	NOT VOTING
Democrats	57	7	4
Republicans	13	17	2
HOUSE	YEA	NAY	NOT VOTING
Democrats	237	48	8
Republicans	70	68	2



# A.M.A. CRITICIZES MEDICARE IN AD

Says It Would Be 'Beginning  
of Socialized Medicine'

Special to The New York Times

CHICAGO, June 8 — The American Medical Association said today that it was placing an advertisement in 100 newspapers to make its position clear on its opposition to medicare. The advertisement calls medicare "the beginning of socialized medicine."



These programs fund home health care, hospice care, maternal/child home visits, child health, STD and family planning clinics and more.





Immunization clinic at the Watauga County Health Department

In 1993, Democratic President Bill Clinton proposed a health care reform plan much like the ACA. It never got a vote in Congress.

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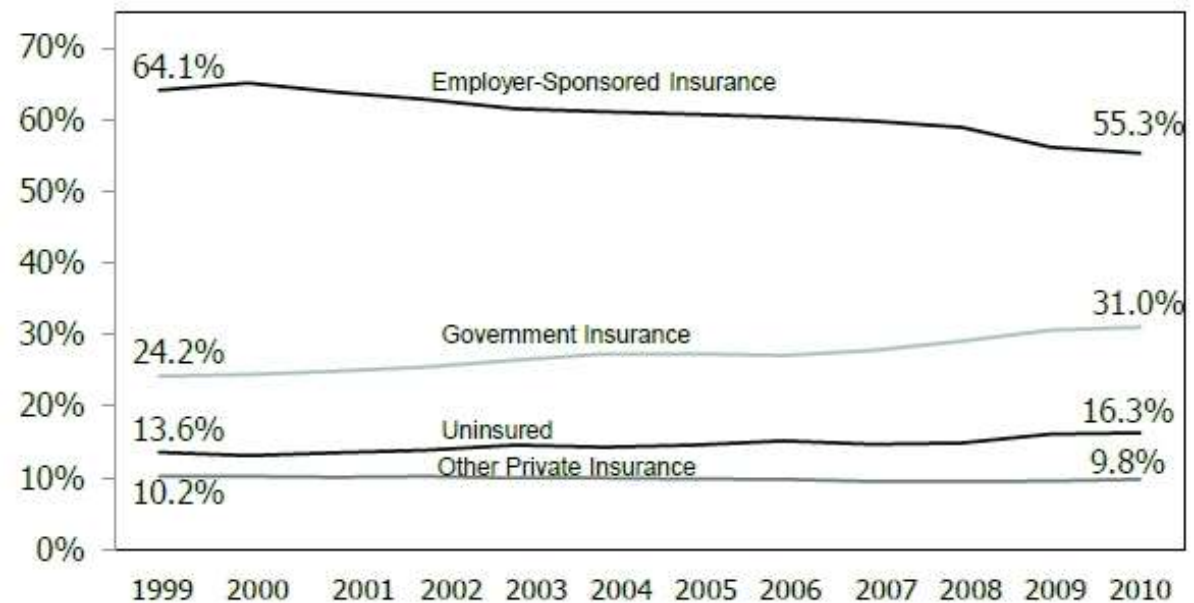




# Uninsured increased by 9 million people 1999-2010

Figure 2

## Insurance Trends, 1999-2010



Notes: Data is for the entire US population. Percentages do not add up to 100% because some people have more than one type of coverage. In 2010, the Census Bureau updated its coverage data for current and prior years to reflect changes in the methods used to impute health insurance for non-respondents. Government insurance includes military coverage.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Income Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010, 2011*.

**Obamacare was passed by Democrat votes:  
60% in the Senate and 51% in the House.**

Dec 24, 2009: H.R. 3590 SENATE		■ DEMOCRAT	■ REPUBLICAN	□ INDEPENDENT
<b>AYE</b>	<b>60%</b>	58	0	2 Both caucus with Democrats
<b>NAY</b>	<b>39%</b>	0	39	0

Mar 21, 2010: H.R. 3590 HOUSE		■ DEMOCRAT	■ REPUBLICAN
<b>AYE</b>	<b>51%</b>	219	0
<b>NAY</b>	<b>49%</b>	34	178

The only thing **BIPARTISAN** about it was the

**OPPOSITION.**

March 23, 2010 – Democratic President Obama signs the AC Act



# Some benefits of the ACA

Protects people with pre-existing conditions from being denied health insurance

Young people are guaranteed coverage on their parents' health plans until they are 26

Expansion of health coverage to low-income families through the Medicaid program in 33 states

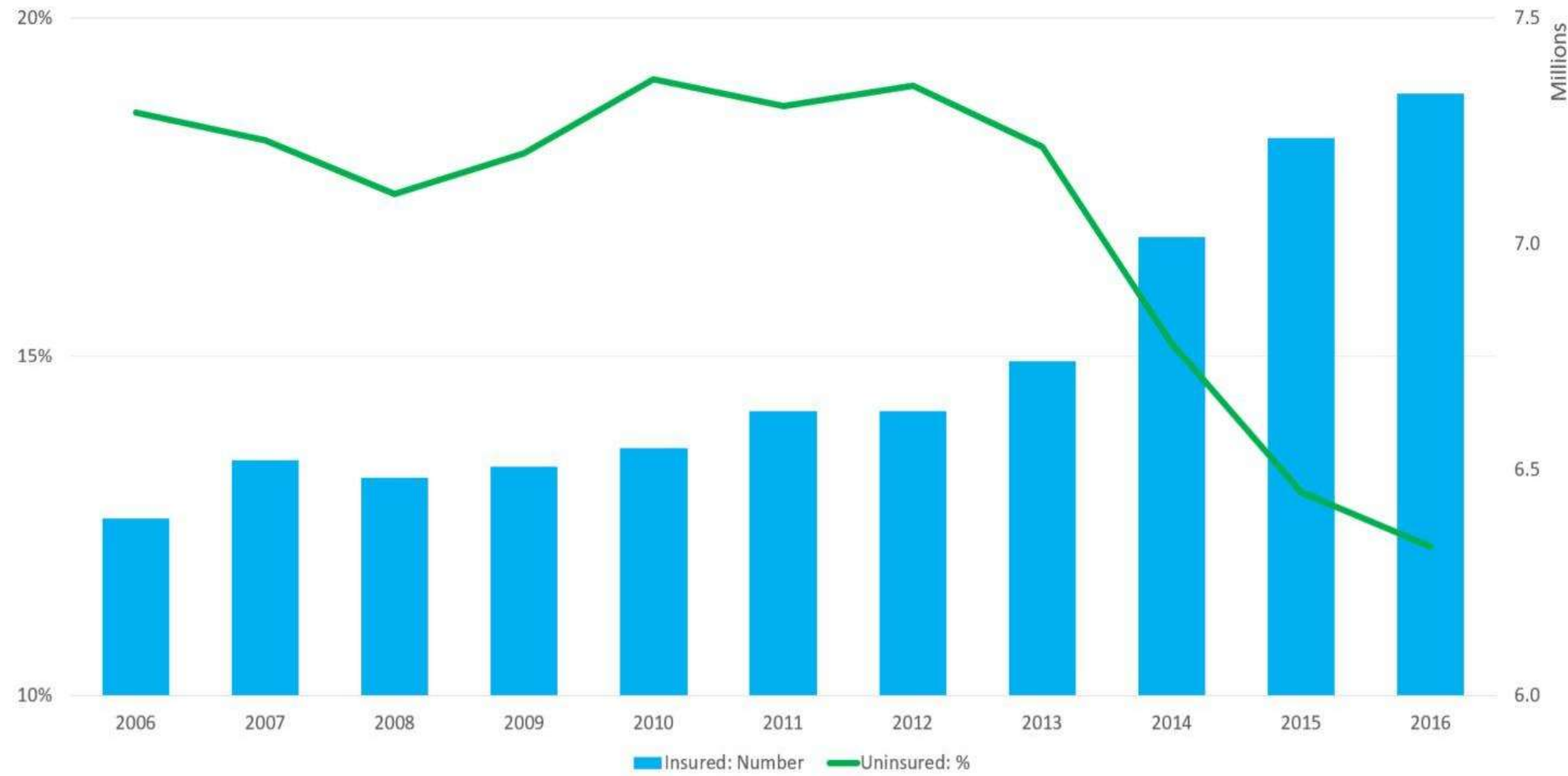
Requires that most health plans cover preventive care—like cancer screenings, vaccines, birth control, blood pressure tests and more—at no additional cost.

Millions more people have coverage for mental health and substance use disorder services.

Eliminates lifetime and annual coverage limits



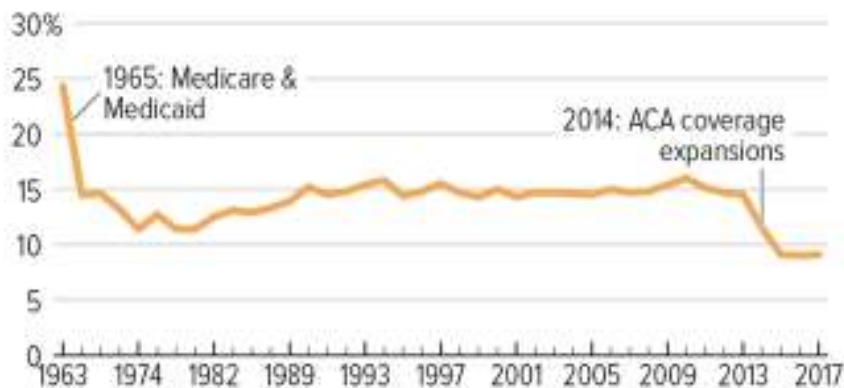
# More People With Health Insurance



# The ACA in North Carolina

## Affordable Care Act Coverage Gains Driving Uninsured Rate to Historic Low

Share of population without health insurance



Note: For 1989 and later, data are annual. For prior years, data are generally biannual. Data for 2018 cover the first half of the year.

Source: Council of Economic Advisers analysis of National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and supplemental sources, updated by CBPP from NHIS data

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

- [There were 524,000 North Carolinians enrolled for 2018](#) through the exchange, the fourth highest in the country.
- Since the ACA was signed into law, the uninsured rate in our state has ticked down from 16.8 percent in 2010 to 10.7 percent in 2017,” said Dr. Laura Gerald, president of the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust

What does the future hold?

Medicaid expansion?

Medicare for all?

Will the Republican Party join in any health care reform?

# North Carolina

**has not**

accepted federal  
Medicaid expansion

2,037,412

Number of people covered by  
Medicaid/CHIP as of July 2018

626,000

Number of additional people who would be  
covered if the state accepted expansion

208,000

Number of people who have NO realistic access  
to health insurance without Medicaid expansion

\$36.1 billion

Money the state is leaving on the table over  
the next decade by not expanding Medicaid

health  
insurance  
.org





CELEBRATE THE LEGACY  
REALIZE THE DREAM

Health Care  
Justice - NC

Improved Medicare for ALL  
*Simple, Sensible, Proudly American*



Health Care Justice  
North Carolina  
Advocating Health Care for All

[nchcnc.org](http://nchcnc.org)

Improved  
Medicare  
for all

Improved  
Medicare  
for all