Dear colleagues,

Next Monday, April 8, the House of Representatives will begin to consider and vote on Governor Kasich’s proposed 2014-2015 budget. Therefore, we have these 7 days to express our opinions to our State Representatives regarding the Governor’s intention to expand Medicaid eligibility to 600,000 Ohioans who do not currently have health insurance. The moral and economic arguments for providing this access have been made elsewhere; the important piece of information we can now communicate is our personal opinion. As elected officials, our Representatives want to know if their constituents will support them when they take an important stand – they count the letters, emails, and phone calls they receive.

This week, I am going to call my Representative to express my support for Medicaid Expansion being included in the budget. I invite and encourage you to send an email or call – speak up, and be heard. If you do not know who your Representative is or how to contact them, then you can go to www.ohiohouse.gov to locate this information based upon your zip code.

It is neither a small thing nor hyperbole to say that the cumulative effect of each of us taking five minutes to send an email or place a call can play a critical role in bettering the health and lives of hundreds of thousands of Ohioans who are our neighbors and, in some cases, our fellow parishioners. Whatever your perspective is on this important issue, please do not miss this opportunity. Join me in standing up and being heard.

May God bless you throughout this Easter Season.

Gratefully,

The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.

Bishop of Ohio