

## MUL, NorthPoint applaud Supreme Court health care ruling

Written by Harry Colbert, Jr.  
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With the United States Supreme Court upholding the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), area groups believe African-Americans and other minorities will be the greatest beneficiaries.

The act, commonly referred to as Obamacare, is a sweeping overhaul of the healthcare system that calls for every citizen to receive health insurance – regardless of ability to pay. Speaking on the condition of anonymity, a senior White House official said up to 5.5 million previously uninsured African-Americans will now be afforded health coverage.

The official said prior to the passing of the ACA, African-Americans were less likely to receive the high-quality healthcare of many of their white counterparts; and the act takes bold steps to resolve this disparity. The source went on to say all Americans will be on a level playing field when it comes to health coverage.

Though the act does not fully go into effect until 2014, Stella Whitney-West, CEO of NorthPoint Health & Wellness said Minnesotans are already reaping the benefits of the ACA.

“Under Governor Mark Dayton, Minnesota was one of the few states that chose to opt-in to the act early,” said Whitney-West. “We’re already extending benefits to those who are the poorest of the poor.”

Whitney-West applauds Pres. Obama for championing healthcare and pointed to several benefits of the act withstanding its constitutional challenge. Among them, she cited the provision that states, no person can be denied coverage for pre-existing conditions and the fact that children can remain insured under their parents’ policies until the age of 26.

“Preventative measures such as health screenings are now free; things such as cancer

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screenings and mammograms,” said Whitney-West. “Proper health care is really based on prevention; not about managing sickness. That’s how optimal health is achieved.”

Mitchell Davis, Director of Health and Workforce Intersections at the Minneapolis Urban League (MUL) said his organization is mobilizing to educate citizens on the benefits of the ACA. The MUL is hosting two community forums to discuss the act and its implications. The first forum takes place Wed., Jul. 11 at the MUL headquarters, 2100 Plymouth Ave. N. from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. A second forum will be held at its south office, 411 E. 38th St., on Jul. 12 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Davis said among benefits of the ACA, senior citizens will save up to \$600 a year in prescription drug costs. He also said the ACA will eliminate the disparity in cost of coverage for women, who according to Davis, were paying more for coverage than men of similar health.

The White House source said now that the issue over the constitutionality of the act has been decided, some citizens will begin seeing an additional benefit of the ACA as soon as August. The source said previously insured citizens will begin to receive rebate checks from insurance companies who were charging for non-medical costs such as executive bonuses and administrative costs. The source said those costs totaled \$10.7 billion.