



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SECRETARY VISITS BAPTIST CHURCH

Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell visited the New Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church on Sunday to address the congregation after worship and encourage residents to enroll in health coverage before the final health insurance deadline on January 31, 2016. Ms. Burwell, second from right, was joined at the enrollment event by from left, County Commission Chair Les Miller, Congresswoman Kathy Castor, Rev. Larry L. Roundtree, II, pastor, and City of Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn. (Photograph by BRUNSON)



Features

U. S. Health And Human Services Secretary Pro Need For Affordable Health Care At Local Bapt



Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell, with Congresswoman Kathy Castor and Mayor Bob Buckhorn, addressed the media about the Affordable Healthcare Act. (Photos by BRUNSON)



Navigators who were on hand to help with information and helping to sign-up are available to answer questions throughout the community.

BY KENYA WOODARD
Sentinel Feature Writer

With the Jan. 31 deadline to get more people signed up for health insurance fast approaching, the nation's top health official stopped by a Tampa church to spread the word about the Affordable Care Act.

At a press conference flanked by U. S. Rep. **Kathy Castor** and Tampa Mayor **Bob Buckhorn** at New Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, U. S. Secretary of Health and Human Services **Secretary Sylvia Burwell** implored the uninsured in Tampa and surrounding areas to visit HealthCare.gov and find a healthcare plan that fits both their needs and their budgets.

"We want everyone who is eligible to get in and make that deadline," she said.

Congresswoman Castor echoed the secretary's statements and pointed out that more than 1 million Floridians are signed up.

"If you really want to win the jackpot, you need to be covered with affordable healthcare," she said, alluding to the estimated \$1.3 billion Powerball lottery. "I want to see that number (of Florida enrollees) increase because we still don't have people signed up."

Last week, **President**

"When it comes to it, the substance of the issue...the American people care about their health and financial security," she said.

The Tampa Bay area is one of the most competitive insurance markets in the country, with nearly a dozen plans under \$75. **Secretary Burwell** also touted improvements in the registration process, including an updated website that is more user-friendly and the availability of personal assistance from healthcare "navigators" to answer questions and help with enrollment.

Hillsborough County **Commissioner Les Miller**, a member of New Mount Zion who also was on hand to greet **Sec. Burwell** and **Cong. Castor**, said their visit to East Tampa in the final push to get more people insured speaks volumes.

"This means that Tampa and Hillsborough County is leading the nation for affordable healthcare enrollment," he said.

Tracey Canty, President of New Mount Zion's health ministry, concurred.

"For them to come where the people are, it helps them to get their questions answered in real time," she said.

New Mount Zion **Pastor Larry Roundtree** said many of his parishioners suffer from chronic illnesses that

provide the community at large with information about the Affordable Care Act and how to sign up for insurance.

"If we could have a larger community initiative with several churches coming together, we could have a larger impact," he said. "I'd like to see this continue and perpet-

Local Enrollment Locations

Open enrollment for insurance via HealthCare.gov ends Jan. 31. Navigators will be available to answer questions and help you enroll from 4 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week through the enrollment deadline of Jan. 31 at:

Cyrus Green Center, 2101 E. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.