



STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

CITY OF JERSEY CITY OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY HALL | 280 GROVE STREET | JERSEY CITY, NJ 07302
P: 201 547 5500 | F: 201 547 5442



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 6, 2015

Contact:

Ryan Jacobs

Communications Director

Ph: 201-547-4836

Email: rjacobs@cnj.org

Obama Administration Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell Visits Jersey City to Tout the Affordable Care Act as 2016 Open Enrollment Period Begins

Jersey City Leads the State in ACA Enrollment; Visit Is Fifth By A Senior Obama Administration Official As Part of ACA Outreach

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven Fulop today welcomes US Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell to Jersey City as part of a tour designed to increase Affordable Care Act enrollment in targeted states, as the 2016 Open Enrollment period gets underway. Jersey City has led the state in ACA enrollment over the previous two years.

“Access to healthcare is a basic human right and in the 21st century nobody should be denied that right based on socioeconomic status,” said Mayor Fulop. “That’s why we’ve done everything we can to reach people in their community, where they are, to get them signed up for affordable health care.”

Fulop added, “I couldn’t be prouder of the work that we’ve done, but as always there is so much more to do and I am pleased to welcome Secretary Burwell to Jersey City to highlight some of the important work we still have ahead of us.”

During the 2016 Open Enrollment period, Secretary Burwell announced four states that will be targeted to drive increased enrollment. New Jersey is one of those states – and in particular, northern New Jersey. Jersey City itself, meanwhile, has led the state in expanding coverage under the ACA. At the kickoff of the Affordable Care Act in October of 2013, approximately 55,000 Jersey City residents, nearly 20 percent, were without healthcare coverage. Through the City’s aggressive outreach with our network of certified application counselors, Jersey City has assisted thousands of residents in receiving healthcare coverage, which is more than any other city in New Jersey.

Secretary Burwell will be visiting the Metropolitan Health Center in Jersey City’s Ward F. After touring the facility, Secretary Burwell will hold a roundtable discussion with Mayor Fulop, members of Congress and state legislators, and healthcare professionals from northern New Jersey. The discussion will focus on strategies to increase enrollment during the 2016 Open Enrollment period.

The 2016 Open Enrollment Period began on November 1st and will last until January 31st, 2016.

Due to Mayor Fulop's aggressive outreach plan, Jersey City has been recognized as a national leader in registering residents for the Affordable Care Act, with five Cabinet-level Obama Administration officials visiting Jersey City as part of ACA outreach since Mayor Fulop took office.

As part of the Mayor's public health efforts, Jersey City was also the first city in the state and only the 6th in the nation to pass an Earned Sick Leave ordinance requiring employers to give workers a certain amount of paid sick leave. The legislation has served as a statewide model, as nine other cities throughout the state – including Elizabeth, Trenton, Paterson, Newark, and Montclair – have followed Jersey City's lead.