

# Expanding Medi-Cal to All Low-Income Adults

**Laurel Lucia**

**Director, Health Care Program**

**UC Berkeley Labor Center**

**California Assembly Budget Committee**

**Subcommittee 1 on Health and Human Services**

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# Undocumented Californians are integral to our state

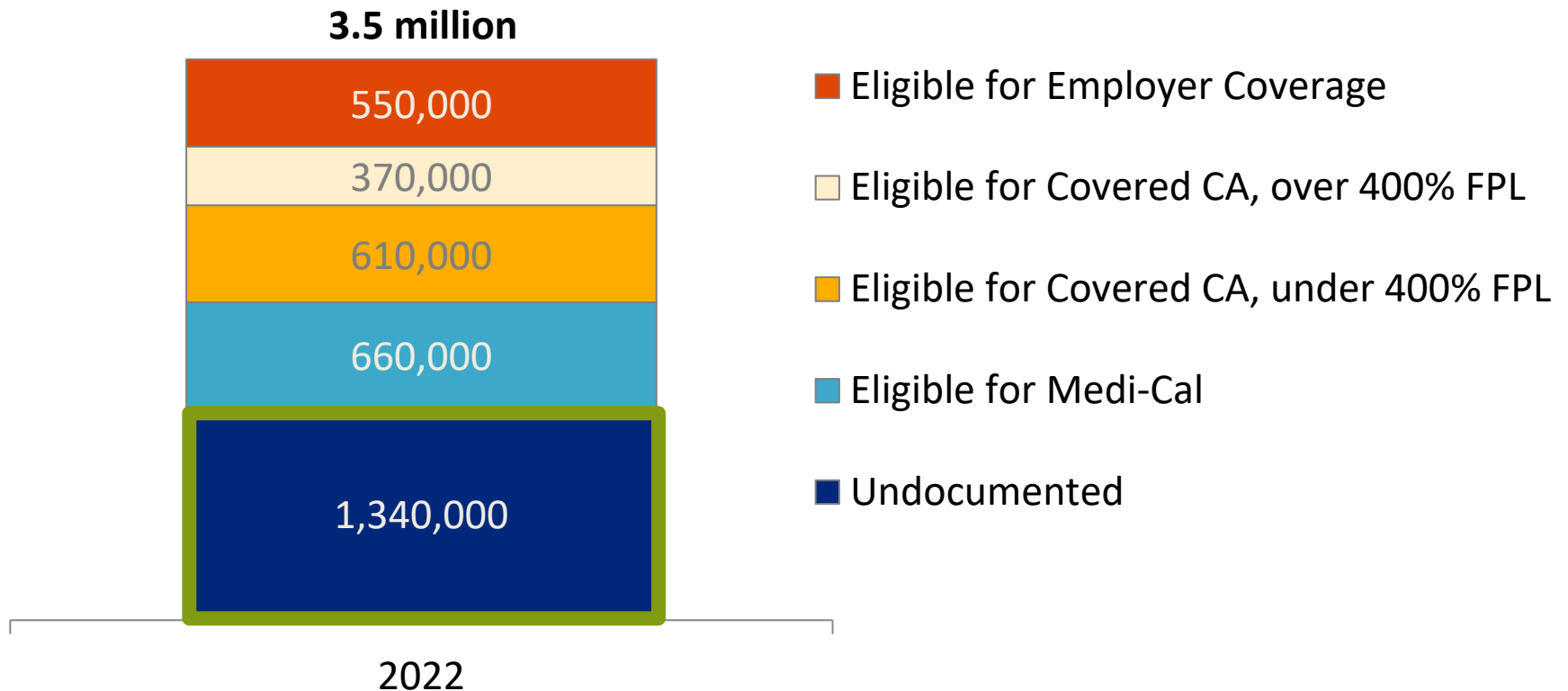
- 2.1 million undocumented residents [1]
- 9% of workforce [2]
- Contribute \$3 billion in state and local taxes annually [3]
- 68% have lived in the U.S. longer than one decade [1]
- 23% own homes [4]
- 1 out of 6 children in the state has an undocumented parent [5]

Sources: [1] USC Equity Research Institute, [California Immigrant Data Portal](#), 2020. [2] Pew Research Center, [U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Population Estimates by State](#), 2019. [3] Wiehe M and Hill M, [State and Local Tax Contributions of Undocumented Californians: County-by- County Data](#), Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 2017. [4] Migration Policy Institute, [Profile of the Unauthorized Population – CA](#). [5] Pastor M et al., [What's at Stake for the State?](#), USC Equity Research Institute, 2013.

# Undocumented Californians continue to make up the largest group of uninsured

Uninsured by eligibility category, age 0-64

*Projections for 2022 published pre-COVID that include projected impact of Young Adult Expansion, state affordability assistance program, and state mandate*

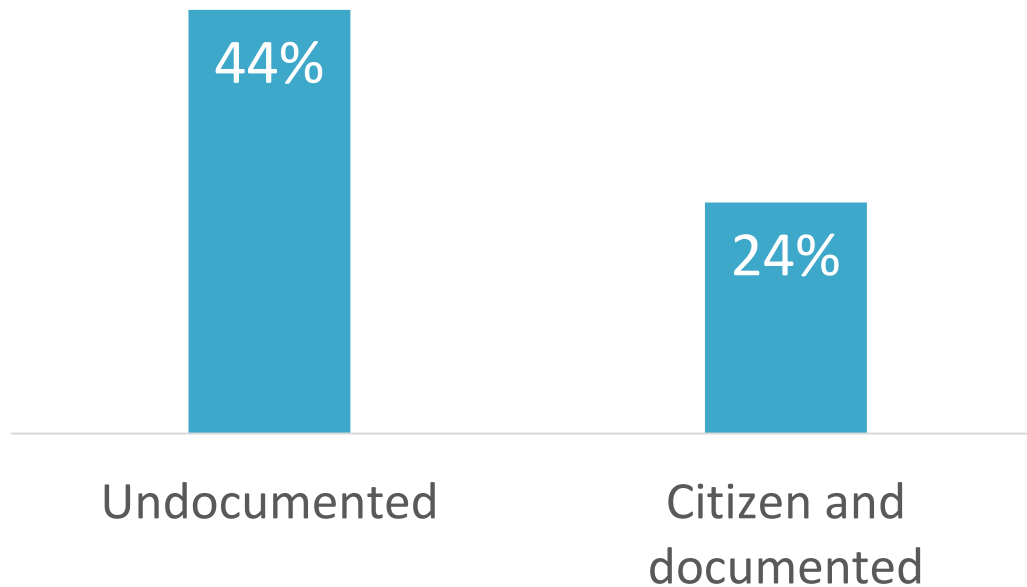


# Health coverage shifts have occurred since 2020

- **Coverage shifts due to COVID include:**
  - Hundreds of thousands of Californians have lost job-based coverage
  - Medi-Cal enrollment was more than 800,000 higher in Dec. 2020 than in Feb. 2020, primarily due to continuous coverage requirements
  - Covered CA enrollment was 200,000 higher in Jan. 2021 than in Jan. 2020
- **For undocumented adults:**
  - Between Jan. and Oct. 2020, 80,000 Californians ages 19-25 gained full Medi-Cal benefits under the Young Adult Expansion (*already reflected on prior slide*)
  - Among the minority of undocumented adults who had job-based coverage pre-COVID, some likely lost that coverage due to job loss  
(21% of CA working non-citizens adults ages 19-64 without a green card had job-based coverage in 2014)

# Undocumented Californians generally experience worse access to care

No Usual Source of Care,  
California Low-Income Adults Ages 19-64,  
2016-2017



# Occupations common among non-citizen workers had higher increase in mortality during pandemic

Californians ages 18-65 experienced a 22% increase in mortality in March to October 2020 compared to prior to the pandemic.

The increase in deaths was even higher for occupations common among non-citizen workers.

% increase in mortality during pandemic compared to pre-pandemic

## By occupation (top five occupations for non-citizen workers)

Cooks: 60%

Miscellaneous agricultural workers: 55%

Construction laborers: 49%

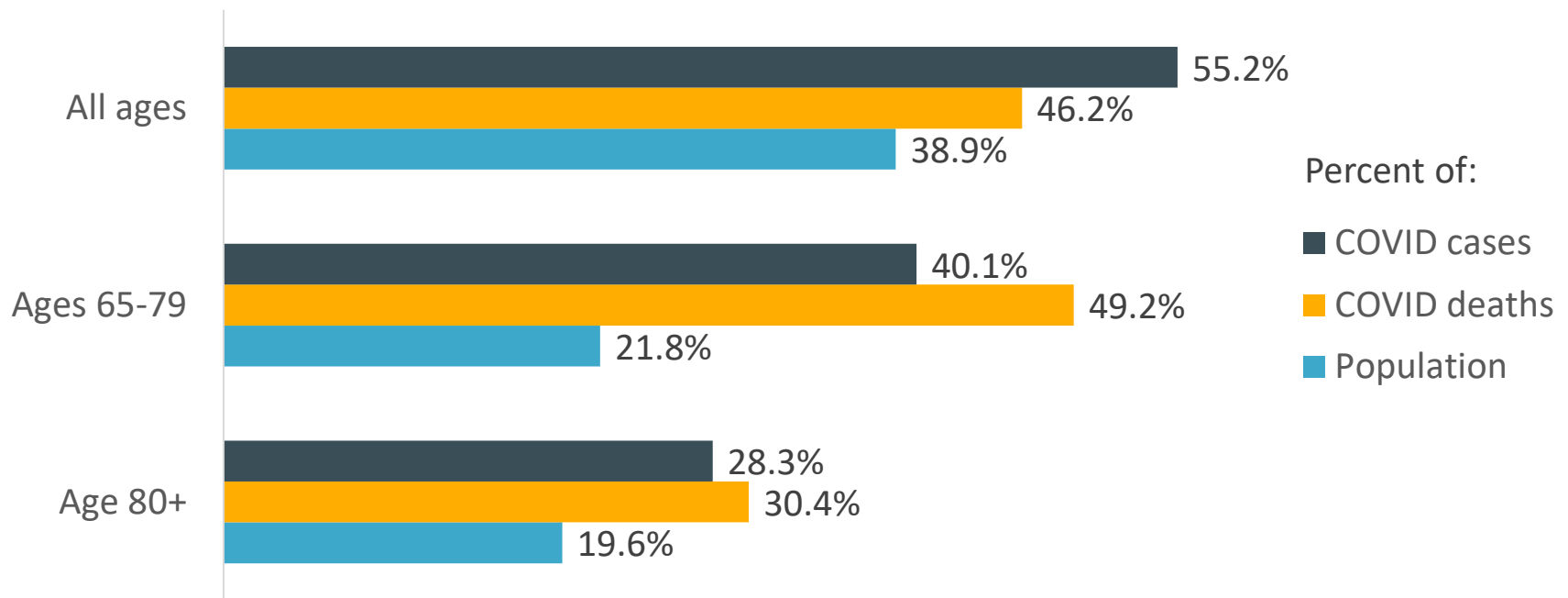
Maids and housekeeping cleaners: 33%

Janitors and building cleaners: Not available

Sources: Yea-Hung Chen, Maria Glymour, et al. (UCSF), [Excess mortality associated with the COVID-19 pandemic among Californians 18–65 years of age, by occupational sector and occupation: March through October 2020](#), medRxiv preprint, January 22, 2021. Samantha Artiga and Matthew Rae, [Health and Financial Risks for Noncitizen Immigrants due to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), Kaiser Family Foundation, August 18, 2020.

# Latinos in California have disproportionately tested positive and died from COVID-19

Latino % of COVID cases and deaths compared to % of population, California



# Health insurance matters: evidence from past insurance expansions

## Examples:

- **Health and access to care**
  - Improved use of preventive and primary care services
  - More regular care for chronic conditions
  - Improved access to mental and substance use disorder treatment
  - Reduced preventable hospital admissions
  - Reduced death rates
- **Financial security**
  - Reduced debt
  - Reduced third party-collections
  - Fewer problems paying medical bills
- **Workforce productivity**
- **Strong health care delivery systems**



# Medi-Cal expansion: well-targeted policy for moving towards universal coverage

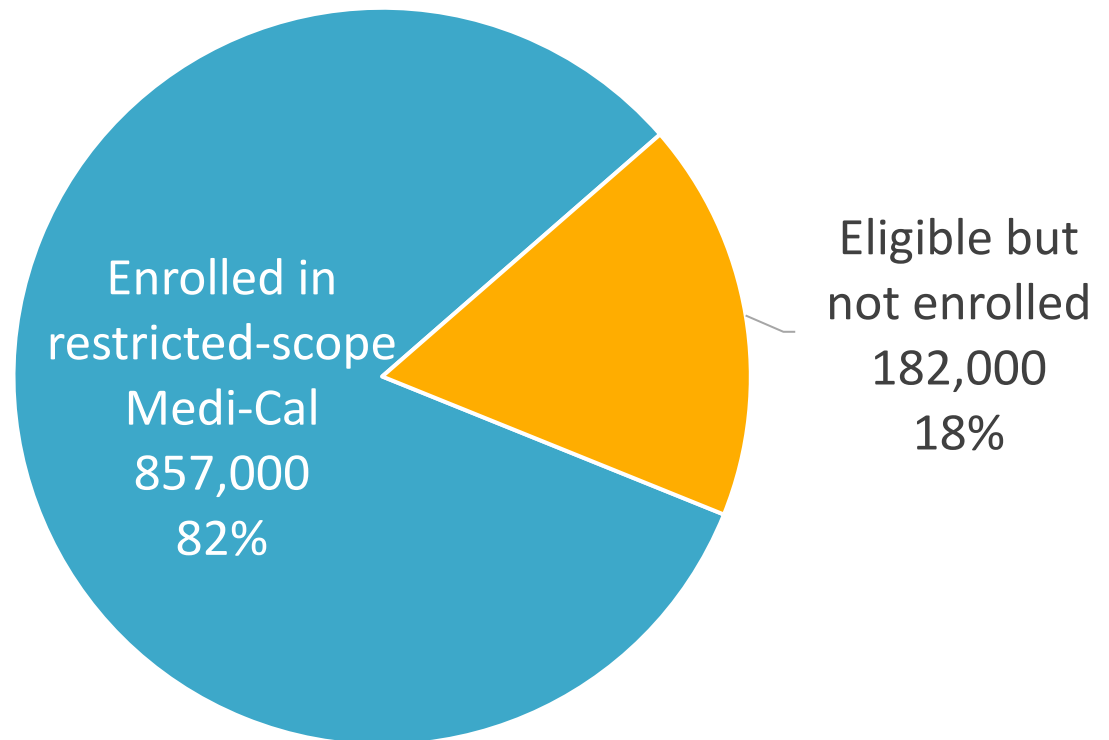
**In 2016-2017:**

- **61% of undocumented Californians had low income**
- **89% of low-income undocumented CA adults ages 19-64 were uninsured**

# Estimated 1.04 million undocumented California adults eligible for proposed Medi-Cal eligibility expansion

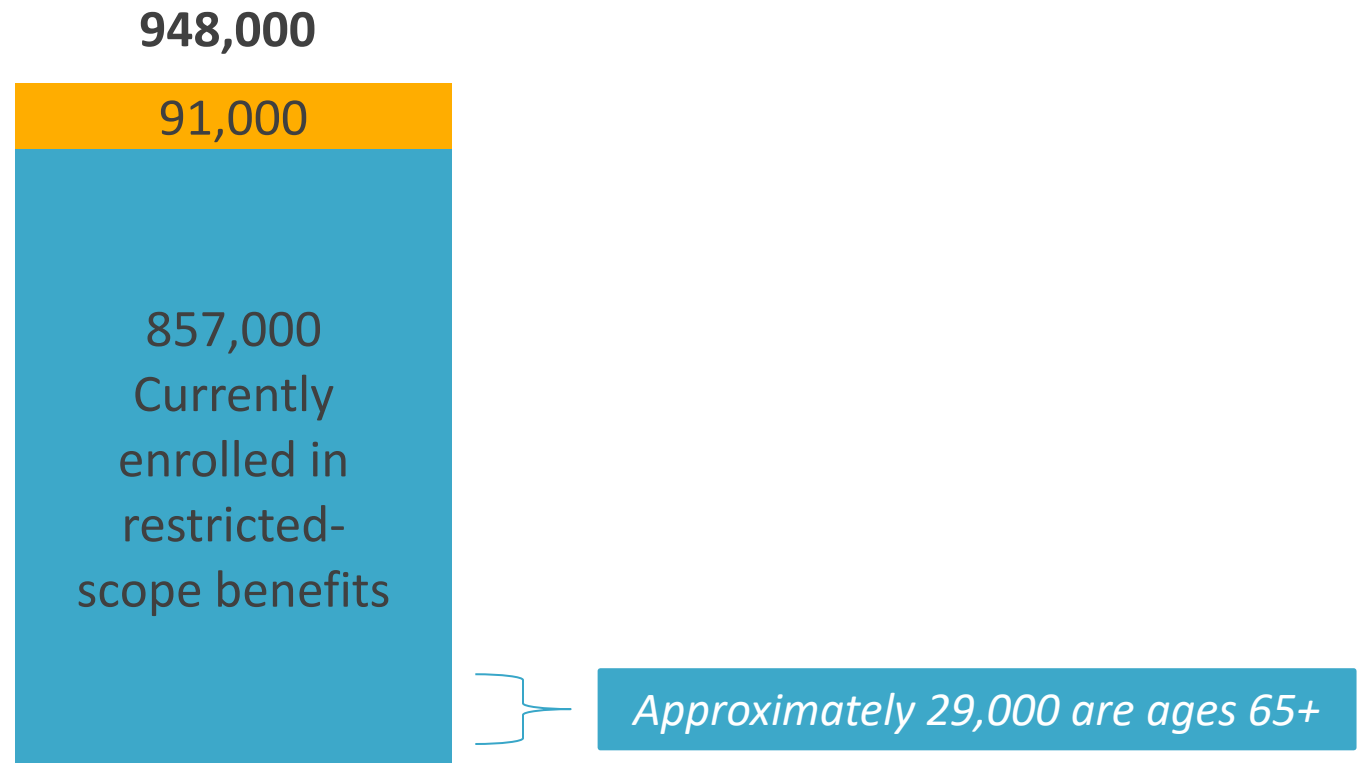
Potentially eligible adults ages 26+, 2021

Potential for automatic transition to full benefits



# Nearly 950,000 undocumented California adults would be expected to enroll

Estimated enrollment ages 26+ if full-scope Medi-Cal were expanded to all low-income adults



Source: Enrollment estimate based on estimated number of adults eligible on prior slide and assumes all restricted-scope enrollees are transitioned to full-scope benefits, plus half of all other eligible adults enroll. DHCS RASD, [Certified Eligibles age 65 and older](#), December 2020.

# Summary

- **Undocumented Californians are the largest group of uninsured**
- **Occupations common among non-citizens had particularly high increases in mortality during the pandemic**
- **Nearly 950,000 undocumented Californians would gain full-scope Medi-Cal coverage under an expansion, reducing the number of uninsured Californians by approximately one-quarter**

# Contact information and related publications

**Laurel Lucia, Health Care Program Director, UC Berkeley Labor Center,  
[Laurel.Lucia@Berkeley.edu](mailto:Laurel.Lucia@Berkeley.edu)**

**[Towards Universal Health Coverage: Expanding Medi-Cal to Low-Income Undocumented Adults](#) (UC Berkeley, Feb. 2019)**

**[California's Steps to Expand Health Coverage and Improve Affordability: Who Gains and Who Will be Uninsured?](#) (UC Berkeley and UCLA, Nov. 2019)**

**Other health care research:**

**<http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/topic/health-care/>**

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