

March 1, 2011

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Member of Congress:

Since their inception, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) have been key sources of health coverage stability for millions of the nation's low-income children and families, seniors, and people with disabilities. In economic downturns, Medicaid and CHIP play a critical role in maintaining access to necessary health care for children and, in some instances, parents. Low-income seniors have been able to turn to Medicaid for help with Medicare premiums and for needed long-term services and supports. People with disabilities have looked to Medicaid for help with the services they need to continue to be active members of their communities. All told, over 50 million people rely on Medicaid and CHIP for access to critical health care services that they could not otherwise afford.

In the Affordable Care Act, Congress recognized the important role these programs play in our nation's health coverage structure. One important provision of the Act ensures stable Medicaid and CHIP coverage by requiring states to hold steady on Medicaid and CHIP eligibility until 2014 for adults and 2019 for children. To date, these stability protections have worked exactly as intended, preventing states from reducing Medicaid and CHIP eligibility as well as from adding red-tape barriers to enrollment just when people need help the most.

But now, some of our nation's Governors are seeking to eliminate this important protection in the face of budget challenges. While there is no doubt that these state budget problems are serious and warrant attention, taking health care away from millions of American seniors and children is the wrong response. What the Governors propose would undercut the remarkable gains we've made in recent years in insuring our nation's children and imperil the availability of long-term services and supports for seniors and people with disabilities. This outcome would be in direct opposition to our nation's goal of reducing the number of uninsured. Moreover, cutting Medicaid would threaten the fragile economic recovery, since cuts to Medicaid translate into significant cuts in state business activity and jobs.

The economic and health care security of millions of Americans is at substantial risk if the stability provisions in the Affordable Care Act are weakened. We therefore urge you to stand firm and vigorously oppose any efforts to weaken these provisions. Our organizations are ready to work with you, with CMS and with state government to find smarter, more efficient ways to respond to state budgetary problems.

Sincerely,

ACCSES (formerly the American Congress of Community Supports and Employment Services)  
Alliance for a Just Society  
Alliance for Children and Families  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
American Association of University Women  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Counseling Association  
American Dance Therapy Association  
American Diabetes Association  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
American Heart Association  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Network of Community Options and Resources  
American Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society on Aging  
Anxiety Disorders Association of America  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations  
Association of Professional Chaplains  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Attention Deficit Disorder Association  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Center for Community Change  
Center for Medicare Advocacy  
Child Welfare League of America  
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Dental Health Project  
Children's Health Fund  
CLASP  
Clinical Social Work Association  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Colon Cancer Alliance  
CommonHealth ACTION  
Community Access National Network  
Community Action Partnership  
Community Organizations in Action  
Consumer Action  
Corporation for Supportive Housing  
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation  
Defeat Diabetes Foundation  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Easter Seals  
Families USA  
Family Voices  
First Focus  
Health Care for America Now|  
Hemophilia Federation of America  
HIV Law Project  
HIV Medicine Association  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Lutheran Services in America

Medicare Rights Center  
Mental Health America  
MomsRising  
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association for Home Care & Hospice  
National Association for Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
National Association of Community Health Centers  
National Association of Council for Children  
National Association of County Behavioral Health & Disability Directors  
National Association of County Human Services Administrators  
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare  
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of Women's Organizations  
National Council on Aging  
National Down Syndrome Congress  
National Foundation for Mental Health  
National Health Law Program  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Network of Public Health Institutes  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Physicians Alliance  
National Respite Coalition  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
National Senior Corps Association  
National Spinal Cord Injury Association  
National Women's Health Network  
National Women's Law Center  
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
Nine to Five, National Association of Working Women  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Partnership for Prevention  
PHI  
Prescription Policy Choices  
Project Inform  
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need  
RESULTS

School Social Work Association of America  
Service Employees International Union  
Shriver Center  
Sugar Law Center for Economic & Social Justice  
The AIDS Institute  
The Arc of the United States  
The Children's Partnership  
The Every Child Matters Education Fund  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
The National Consumer Voice for Quality, Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR)  
The Patients' Union  
Treatment Access Expansion Project  
Treatment Action Group  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United Cerebral Palsy  
United Spinal Association  
Voices for America's Children  
WhyHunger  
Wider Opportunities for Women  
Witness Justice  
Women of Reform Judaism