



Guide to Recess Activities to Protect Medicaid Updated September 2011

Medicaid is under attack, and it needs your support. Policymakers have responded to public outcry to attacks on Medicaid so far, but it remains a target for crippling cuts as budget negotiations continue in Washington, D.C.

Whether your delegation is part of the [super committee](#) or not, outreach to all Members of Congress during the [upcoming recess](#) is essential to build momentum against these threats.

This also provides an opportunity to engage outside partners – see our [checklist of potential organizations and constituencies](#) – as well as your base. Their support and involvement will provide the energy and impact necessary in the fight to protect the seniors, people living with disabilities and children who rely on the Medicaid program for necessary medical care.

Recess Activities

Reach Out to Members of Congress Directly

- **Schedule in-district meetings or phone calls** with Members of Congress and their staff. Organize a [diverse group of stakeholders and constituents](#) to meet with members and emphasize the importance of protecting Medicaid. Use our [guide to a successful policymaker meeting](#) along with our [basic message box](#).
- **NOTE:** In direct communication with Members who are already supportive of Medicaid, ask them to commit to a higher level of leadership on the issue by taking one or more of [these actions](#).
- **Organize a sign-on letter** from advocacy organizations and [other stakeholders](#) in your state asking the Member to oppose any Medicaid cuts that shift costs onto beneficiaries or state governments (see this [sample for super committee members](#)).

Attend Members' Town Hall Meetings

- **Organize grassroots turnout** to these meetings to emphasize the importance of protecting Medicaid
 - Use our [sample questions](#) to highlight the threats to Medicaid
 - Encourage current Medicaid beneficiaries – or their family members – to share their stories about how Medicaid has helped them, and to ask the member of Congress to stand with them in support of the program
- **Make your case to the media** by using our [media availability template](#) to draw press attention to your Town Hall activities – and make sure to approach reporters covering the town hall meetings to offer interviews with your spokespeople

Generate grassroots communication to Members' offices

- **Generate calls and letters into the members' office** in support of Medicaid and against the current threats as you can. See an [example](#) from advocates in Missouri.
- **Flood the members' twitter or Facebook page** with supportive messages about Medicaid by encouraging your grassroots base to use [our sample tweets and Facebook posts](#).

Engage the media

- **Submit op-eds and letters to the editor** about the importance of protecting Medicaid and the harm of the current proposals in Congress. Two great examples are these op-eds from advocates in [Texas](#) and [Maine](#) or use our sample op-eds on [community health centers](#) or to [co-author with a hospital or provider](#).
- **Hold editorial board meetings** to engage your local paper's editors and shape coverage of the issue. Our [tip sheet](#) gives you the ABCs – from requesting the meeting, to preparation, and having an impact during the meeting.
- **Write letters to the editor** and encourage members of your network to respond to coverage. Use these templates from an [insured Medicaid supporter](#) or [an advocate](#).
- **Highlight innovative state approaches to saving Medicaid dollars.** If your state is engaged in innovative approaches to saving Medicaid money without harming care – for example, [15 states](#) are participating in a recently announced [demonstration program to enhance the quality of care and reduce the costs](#) of those eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare.
- **Ask supportive stakeholder groups to submit op-eds in support of Medicaid.** See this example from a business groups in [New Hampshire](#), and [this example](#) from a physician in [Rhode Island](#).