

July 12, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you continue negotiations with Congress on deficit reduction plans, we urge you to reject any attempt to produce savings through cuts to federal Medicaid funding. As organizations committed to advancing access to health care services for poor and low-income individuals, we are deeply concerned about the disastrous effects that such cuts will have for the most vulnerable Medicaid enrollees. Medicaid is the cornerstone of health care for low-income Americans; more than 58 million individuals are currently enrolled in Medicaid.

We continue to voice our strong opposition to proposals to block grant Medicaid or otherwise arbitrarily cap federal Medicaid expenditures. We are very appreciative of your stance in opposing these harmful measures. However, we also want to note our concerns with proposals for a single “blended” matching rate for all Medicaid and CHIP enrollees. If a blended rate is adopted as a method of obtaining reduced Medicaid expenditures, it would likely be as detrimental as a cap on overall Medicaid spending. Replacing the various matching rates with a single blended rate for each state will not constrain costs, but will only shift risks and costs to states, healthcare providers, and individuals. And since the proposal was developed to cut funding, any administrative efficiencies of having one matching rate will be offset by the need for states to cut eligibility, services or provider rates to come up with the projected savings. This sharp decrease in federal Medicaid funding could force many low-income people to go without essential health care services.

Further, we urge you to consider that any deficit reduction plan must include new revenues. Measures to reduce the national debt must be fair and balanced, with both spending cuts and revenue increases. While we agree that it is important to reduce our national debt, we must not decimate crucial programs providing services to the lowest income Americans. We thus oppose cuts to Medicaid that would reduce eligibility or services to seniors and their families, people with disabilities, children, and our most vulnerable citizens.

The goals of reducing the national deficit and improving public health are not mutually exclusive. Medicaid is essential to the health and well-being of millions of poor and low-income Americans, and to ensuring a healthy workforce and healthy children. We strongly urge you to pursue a balanced approach to reducing the deficit, while opposing significant cuts to funding for the Medicaid program.

Please do not hesitate to contact Cate Hodgetts at the National Health Law Program at 202-289-7661 or [hodgetts@healthlaw.org](mailto:hodgetts@healthlaw.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

## National Health Law Program

Advocates for Children & Youth

AIDS United

American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Public Health Association

Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest

Asian American Justice Center, member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian Pacific American Legal Center, member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

California Academy of Family Physicians

California Black Women's Health Project

California Coverage & Health Initiatives

California Health Advocates

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

California Primary Care Association

California State Association of Counties

Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State

Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly

Center for Civil Justice

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

Center for Public Representation

Child Welfare League

Children Now

Clinica Sierra Vista

Colorado Center on Law and Policy

Commission on the Public's Health System

Community Catalyst

Connecticut Association for Human Services

Connecticut Legal Services

Consumer Health Coalition

County Welfare Directors Association of California

Disability Policy Consortium

Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund

Disability Rights Wisconsin

Empire Justice Center

Families USA

Family Care Council Area 9 (West Palm Beach)

First Focus

Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy

Florida CHAIN (Community Health Action Information Network)

Florida Legal Services

Free Clinics of Michigan

Greater Hartford Legal Aid

Having Our Say Coalition

Health Care for America Now  
Health & Disability Advocates  
Hemophilia Federation of America  
HIV Medicine Association  
Kentucky Equal Justice Center  
L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Maine Equal Justice  
Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative  
Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform  
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute  
Maternal and Child Health Access, Los Angeles  
Medicaid Matters NY  
Metro New York Health Care for All Campaign  
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health  
Michigan League for Human Services  
Mid-Minnesota Legal Assistance  
Missouri Budget Project  
Missouri Jobs with Justice  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of County Human Services Administrators  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for LGBT Health  
National Council of Jewish Women, California Sections  
National Education Association  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Respite Coalition  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
National Women's Law Center  
Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest  
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty  
New York Association on Independent Living  
New York Immigration Coalition  
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest  
New Yorkers for Accessible Health Coverage  
Ohio Poverty Law Center  
PHI – Quality Care *through* Quality Jobs  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Pennsylvania Health Law Project  
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada  
Progressive States Network

Public Justice Center

Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities

Raising Women's Voices

RESULTS

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center

TakeAction Minnesota

Transgender Law Center

United Spinal Association

Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio (UHCAN Ohio)

Virginia Organizing

Voices for America's Children

VOR - Speaking out for people with intellectual disabilities