

January 14, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Chairman
House Ways & Means Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman
House Energy & Commerce
Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
House Education & Labor
Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Health, Education, Labor &
Pensions Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Dodd
Chairman
Subcommittee on Children &
Families
Senate Health, Education, Labor &
Pensions Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Speaker Pelosi and Chairmen Rangel, Waxman, Miller, Baucus, Dodd and Harkin:

As you craft the final health care reform bill, the undersigned organizations urge you to ensure meaningful access to care under the proposed Medicaid expansion by adopting the House provision to bring Medicaid reimbursement rates for primary care in line with comparable Medicare rates within four years.

While we strongly support expanding Medicaid to extend health coverage to low income individuals, we are very concerned that failure to address reimbursement disparities will weaken an already fragile network of Medicaid providers at a time when the demand for their services will be growing.

Medicaid rates average just 66% of Medicare rates for primary care services and are woefully inadequate to cover the cost of providing care. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the planned expansion will increase enrollment in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program by as many as 15 million beneficiaries. Those who rely on Medicaid to meet their health care needs include millions of low-income women, children, minorities and individuals with disabilities. The inadequacy of Medicaid reimbursement levels must be addressed in conjunction with the Medicaid expansion or we risk leaving our poorest and most medically-vulnerable residents behind despite the remarkable promise offered by health reform.

Please give high priority to ensuring access to care for Medicaid beneficiaries by adopting the House provision to adjust Medicaid payments for primary care to at least 100 percent of Medicare rates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully signed by the following organizations:

1. ACCSES
2. AFL-CIO
3. AFSCME
4. AIDS Action Baltimore
5. AIDS Action Council
6. AIDS Foundation of Chicago
7. AIDS Project Los Angeles
8. AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin
9. AIDS/HIV Health Alternatives
10. American Academy of Family Physicians
11. American Academy of Pediatrics
12. American Academy of Physician Assistants
13. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
14. American Foundation for the Blind
15. American Anesthesiology Group, Inc.
16. American Association of People with Disabilities
17. American Association on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
18. American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
19. American College of Osteopathic Internists
20. American College of Physicians
21. American Congress of Obstetrician & Gynecologists, District IX
22. American Hospice Foundation
23. American Network of Community Options and Resources
24. American Nurses Association
25. American Occupational Therapy Association
26. American Osteopathic Association
27. American Public Health Association
28. American Society of Nephrology
29. American Thoracic Society
30. APSE
31. Association for Community Affiliated Plans
32. Association of University Centers on Disabilities
33. Autism Society
34. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
35. Black Women's Health Imperative
36. Broward House
37. Burton Blatt Institute
38. California Medical Association
39. California Psychiatric Association

40. Catholic Health Association of the US
41. Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
42. Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.
43. Cerebral Palsy Association of Ohio
44. Children's Health Fund
45. Clinica Sierra Vista
46. Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
47. Coalition on Human Needs
48. Committee of Interns and Residents/SEIU Healthcare
49. Community Access National Network
50. Consumer Action
51. Consumers Union
52. Council for Exceptional Children
53. Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
54. Doctors Council SEIU
55. Doctors for America
56. Easter Seals
57. Epilepsy Foundation
58. Families USA
59. Family Voices
60. First Focus
61. Harlem United Community AIDS Center
62. Harris Center for Disability and Health Policy
63. Health Care For All (Massachusetts)
64. Health Reform Program
65. HIV Dental Alliance
66. HIV Health Services Planning Council-San Francisco
67. HIV Medicine Association
68. HIVictorious, Inc.
69. Housing Works
70. La Fe Policy Research and Education Center
71. Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
72. Maine AIDS Alliance
73. Medicare Rights Center
74. Mental Health America
75. Minnesota Medical Association
76. MomsRising
77. National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors
78. National Alliance on Mental Illness
79. National Association of Children's Hospitals
80. National Association of Community Health Centers
81. National Association of County Human Services Administrators
82. National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
83. National Association of People with AIDS
84. National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
85. National Council of Jewish Women
86. National Disability Rights Network
87. National Down Syndrome Congress
88. National Health Law Program

89. National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
90. National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
91. National Partnership for Women & Families
92. National Patient Advocate Foundation
93. National Physicians Alliance
94. National Respite Coalition
95. National Spinal Cord Injury Association
96. National Women's Health Network
97. National Women's Law Center
98. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
99. Northwest Health Law Advocates
100. NYC for Change
101. Out of Many, One
102. Pediatrix Medical Group
103. Planned Parenthood Federation of America
104. Project Inform
105. Racial and Ethnic Disparities Coalition
106. Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need
107. Renal Physicians Association
108. Reproductive Health Access Project
109. RESULTS
110. Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition
111. San Diego Psychiatric Society
112. San Francisco AIDS Foundation
113. San Francisco Clinic Consortium
114. Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
115. Sonoma County Commission on AIDS
116. Society of General Internal Medicine
117. Southern Poverty Law Center
118. Strong Consulting
119. Tennessee Health Care Campaign
120. Tennessee Justice Center
121. The AIDS Institute
122. The Arc of the United States
123. The National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems
124. The U.S. Positive Women's Network (PWN)
125. Treatment Access Expansion Project
126. U.S. PIRG
127. UHCAN Ohio
128. United Cerebral Palsy
129. United Food & Commercial Workers Local 1059
130. United Spinal Association
131. United Way Worldwide
132. Village Care
133. Virginia Poverty Law Center
134. Voices for America's Children
135. Well Spouse Association
136. Women Together for Change
137. World Institute on Disability

Support for Medicaid Payment Parity

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