

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 1, 2008

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. President:

The Congress is concerned about the many proposed changes by the Administration in delivering healthcare services to the neediest in our country. We understand how difficult it is to balance the need to lower costs under Medicaid while providing the services and benefits that so many depend upon to maintain their health and live and participate in their community.

Unfortunately, the search for lowering healthcare costs often leads to cutting government programs. The Medicaid regulations issued by this Administration over the past year essentially reduce or eliminate funding for many long-standing Medicaid services administered by the States. Congress is seeking to take a different route with these regulations, one that may improve the system, reduce costs, but not lose the care and services that millions of Medicaid patients need. While this work may take more time, it is what the American people expect from their government and their elected representatives.

Towards that end, we respectfully request that you withdraw your veto threat of H.R. 5613, the Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act. We ask that you sign the bill into law so that Congress may have this specific time period to review the seven Medicaid regulations before they go into effect, and consider how we would both address the underlying purposes of these regulations without abruptly terminating the crucial funding States depend upon to administer the services and programs their citizens need.

The regulations that H.R. 5613 would delay implementing cuts in long-standing Medicaid services for public safety net institutions. Other programs and services that would be prohibited or lose funding include rehabilitation services for people with disabilities; outreach and enrollment in schools as well as specialized medical transportation to school for children covered by Medicaid; hospital clinic services; and case management services that allow people with disabilities to remain in their community. Elimination of preventive health care will certainly have a devastating effect on the health of Medicaid patients, which will only lead to higher costs in the future.

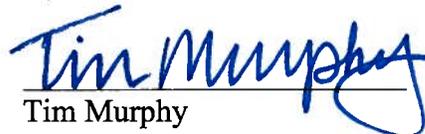
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H.R. 5613 passed the House of Representatives with broad bipartisan support, and the Senate has vowed to act quickly on the bill to protect the Medicaid needs of their constituents. We anticipate that this bill will be sent to the White House for signature shortly. We urge that you reconsider your veto threat and sign into law H.R. 5613, thus permitting Congress additional time to review the regulations, understand the concerns, and seek ways to meet those concerns without cutting services and programs so needed by millions of Americans, in particular children and those who are mentally and physically disabled.

Sincerely,



John D. Dingell
Member of Congress



Tim Murphy
Member of Congress