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American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American Dental Education Association

American Health Care Association

America's Essential Hospitals

Association for Community Affiliated Plans

Associations of Clinicians for the Underserved

Catholic Health Association of the United States

Children's Hospital Association

Easter Seals

The Jewish Federations of North America

Medicaid Health Plans of America

National Association of Community Health Centers

National Association of Counties

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of Rural Health Clinics

National Council for Behavioral Health

National Health Care for the Homeless Council

National Hispanic Medical Association

National Rural Health Association

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR MEDICAID

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader United
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Mr. President, Speaker Boehner, Rep. Pelosi, and Sens. McConnell and Reid:

As we approach the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson signing Medicare and Medicaid into law, The Partnership for Medicaid and a bipartisan group of 191 national and state leaders ask that you join us in recognizing Medicaid's strongly positive impact on the health of our people and nation.

The Partnership comprises 23 national organizations that represent physicians and other providers, hospitals, clinics, health plans, counties and labor. Joining the Partnership on this letter are two former Secretaries of the Department of Health and Human Services, three former elected officials, two former national Medicaid Directors, the agency that oversees Medicaid; 38 current and former state Medicaid officials; 23 national organizations and state and local organizations dedicated to improving the health of all people.

For half a century, Medicaid has been a lifeline of support for countless millions of individuals and families across the United States. It has been there when people face life's most difficult circumstances—serious illness, long-term disability, life-threatening injuries—and it has provided a solid foundation for well-being by covering preventive screenings and primary care services. Medicaid fills the gaps in health coverage that frequently occur in people's lives, helping them transition through life events that would otherwise leave them uninsured.

Turning 50 is a great time to take stock and assess. What has Medicaid come to mean after half a century, and how has it improved the lives of the individuals and families it serves?

Medicaid is a Part of Americans' Lives

Since President Johnson signed Medicaid into law in 1965, it has evolved from a program designed to serve the health care needs of low-income women and their

children to one that cares for nearly one in five Americans. They include seniors in need of long-term services and supports, people living with disabilities, teenagers and young adults in foster care, and other children, adolescents and adults. Medicaid's impact is broad: It has touched the lives of nearly two-thirds of all Americans, either directly or through care for a family member or friend.

Medicaid Helps Working Families

The majority of adults with Medicaid are employed and pay taxes, but work in low-wage jobs for small firms or service industries that typically don't offer health insurance. Also, the average adult with Medicaid spends only a portion of any given year enrolled in the program, and children with Medicaid coverage live healthier and more productive lives as adults than similarly disadvantaged children without access to the program. Medicaid also helps the economy, especially in rural communities, by supporting vital health care jobs at hospitals, health centers, and other safety net providers, and by keeping workers healthy and on the job.

Medicaid Gives States Flexibility to Innovate

Medicaid is unique in its design as a federal and state program. Thanks to its extraordinary flexibility, it has allowed states to test innovative new ways to fund care for those in need. State Medicaid programs have truly been laboratories of change for the better in American health care. States have used the flexibility of Medicaid waivers to expand access to home and community-based services that make independent living and community integration possible for people with disabilities and low-income elderly. In fact, since Medicaid was enacted, every state has been granted at least one waiver and most have received several.

Medicaid is a Solid Investment

Medicaid accomplishes much more than many people know. Combining a federal guarantee of coverage with state-based innovation and flexibility helps guard the health of people when they need it most while building a more responsive, patient-centered and effective health care system. Medicaid is efficient, as well. Even during one of the nation's worst economic downturns since the Great Depression, 2007 to 2011, Medicaid medical service spending per enrollee grew only 2.3 percent annually—significantly slower than the rate of growth for private insurance. And like American employers, Medicaid looks to managed care for even greater efficiency, with more than half of those covered enrolled in a managed care plan.

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicaid to remind people of the breadth and depth of support and appreciation America's leaders have for this vital program. Since 1965, Medicaid has proved its value to the people and communities it serves—and to taxpayers. And Medicaid will continue to evolve, while maintaining its role as a lifeline that, one day, many of us might need.

As we celebrate the first half-century of Medicaid's contributions to our nation's health, let's work together to preserve and strengthen this program for the next 50 years.

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List of Signers

Federal Government Officials

The Honorable Kathleen G. Sebelius, Former Secretary of Health & Human Services
The Honorable Donna E. Shalala, Former Secretary of Health & Human Services
The Honorable Henry A. Waxman, U.S. Representative
The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd, U.S. Senator
The Honorable David F. Durenberger, U.S. Senator
Timothy Westmoreland, Director, Former Center for Medicaid and State Operations, Health Care Financing Administration
Rozann Abato, Former Director Medicaid Bureau, Health Care Financing Administration

State and Local Government Officials

C. Patrick Babcock – Former Director, Michigan Department of Social Services
Melanie Bella – Former Indiana State Medicaid Director
Pat Casanova – Former Indiana State Medicaid Director
Debbie I. Chang – Former Maryland State Medicaid Director
Donna Checkett – Former Missouri State Medicaid Director
Hersh Crawford, PhD – Former Oregon State Medicaid Director
Gary Crayton – Former Florida State Medicaid Director
Tom Dehner – Former Massachusetts State Medicaid Director
Toby Douglas – Former California State Medicaid Director
Barbara Edwards – Former Ohio State Medicaid Director
Eileen Ellis – Former Michigan State Medicaid Director
David S. Feinberg – Former Pennsylvania State Medicaid Director
Steve Fitton – Former Michigan State Medicaid Director
Mike Fogarty, MSW, JD – Former Oklahoma Medicaid Director
Kathy Gifford – Former Indiana State Medicaid Director
Joan Henneberry – Former Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing
James Hooley – Former Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Medical Security
Mary B. Kennedy – Former Minnesota State Medicaid Director
Deborah Kilstein – Former Acting Medicaid Director of New Jersey
Leonard Kirschner – Arizona Health Care Costs Containment System
Kathryn Kuhmerker – Former New York State Medicaid Director
Izanne Leonard-Haak – Former Pennsylvania State Medicaid Director
Jane Longo – Former CHIP Illinois Director
Timothy Murphy, Former Massachusetts Secretary of HHS
Margaret Murray – Former New Jersey State Medicaid Director
Mike Nardone – Former Pennsylvania State Medicaid Director
Jim Parker – Former Illinois State Medicaid Director
David Parrella – Former Connecticut Medicaid Director and National Association of Medicaid Directors Chair
Lee Partridge – Former Washington, D.C., Medicaid Director
Kip Piper – Former Wisconsin State Medicaid Director
Matt Powers – Former Illinois State Medicaid Director
Tony Rodgers – Former Arizona State Medicaid Director
Stan Rosenstein – Former California State Medicaid Director
Vernon K. Smith, PhD – Former Michigan State Medicaid Director
Mark Trail – Former Georgia State Medicaid Director
Linda Wertz – Former Texas State Medicaid Director

National Health Care Organizations

American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American Dental Association
American Public Health Association
America's Essential Hospitals
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Children's Hospital Association
Doctors For America
Easter Seals
The Jewish Federations of North America
March of Dimes
Medicaid Health Plans of America
National Association of Community Health Centers
National Association of Counties
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Rural Health Clinics
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Health Care for the Homeless
National Hispanic Medical Association
Nurse Family Partnership

State and Local Organizations and Providers

Broadlawns Medical Center, Des Moines, IA
Central Virginia Health Services, Inc., New Canton, VA
Clinica Sierra Vista, Fresno, CA
Colorado Community Health Network, Denver, CO
Community Health Association of Spokane, Spokane, WA
Community Health Network of Washington, Seattle, WA
Community Health Partnership, Chicago, IL
Community Health Plan of Washington, Seattle, WA
Health Center Association of Nebraska, Omaha, NE
La Clinica de Familia, Inc., Las Cruces, NM
Louisiana Primary Care Association, Baton Rouge, LA
Neighborhood Health Plan, Boston, MA
New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, New York, NY
Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers, Lemoyne, PA
Pomona Community Health Center, Pomona, CA
Priority Partners, Glen Burnie, MD
San Mateo Medical Center, San Mateo, CA
Southwest Virginia Community Health Systems, Inc., Saltville, VA
Texas Association of Community Health Centers, Austin, TX
Tri-Area Community Health, Ferrum, VA
University of Missouri Health Care, Columbia, MO
University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX
University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, WA
Virginia Commonwealth University Health System, Richmond, VA
Virginia Community Healthcare Association, Henrico, VA
West County Health Centers, Chicago, IL

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