



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

November 17, 2011

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20201

*VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL*

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

On November 10 the Wisconsin Department of Health Services submitted a Medicaid waiver and State Medicaid Plan Amendment request to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. If approved in its current form, the request from Governor Walker's administration would result in nearly 65,000 Wisconsinites—including 29,000 children—losing or being denied state health care coverage (according to estimates by the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau).

We strongly urge CMS to work with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services in a thoughtful but expeditious manner to achieve Medicaid cost savings that will not ultimately result in vulnerable Wisconsin citizens losing or being denied access to affordable health care coverage. We also stand ready and are more than willing to work together with your agency, Governor Walker's administration and others to do anything we can to find a solution that avoids people losing their health care coverage.

Wisconsin has been a national leader in ensuring that families and especially children have access to affordable quality health care. We adamantly oppose any Medicaid waiver or State Plan Amendment plan that will effectively result in thousands of children and adults in Wisconsin losing access to health care. The federal health care reform law prohibits states from changing their Medicaid eligibility standards for children until at least 2019. Yet Governor Walker's Medicaid waiver request seeks permission to ignore this requirement so his administration can drop health care coverage for 29,000 children. While reasonable minds can disagree on how to solve problems, we believe dropping health care for children is an unacceptable option.

To date, Governor Walker's administration has only offered a set of false choices to reduce Medicaid spending in Wisconsin. As you may know, Governor Walker inserted language into Wisconsin's biennial budget stipulating that if CMS does not approve the Walker Medicaid plan before December 31, 2011, the Department of Health Services will be required to drop state

health care coverage for non-disabled, non-pregnant adults with income above 133% of the federal poverty level. Approximately 53,000 people will lose their health care coverage if this arbitrary deadline is triggered. And, this will occur despite the fact that the state is not facing a budget deficit.

We refuse to accept Governor Walker's politically motivated premise that either 53,000 or 65,000 Wisconsin citizens must lose their health insurance to balance the Medicaid budget. Therefore, we encourage you to engage with Wisconsin officials soon to explore alternatives that will achieve responsible Medicaid savings while retaining our shared commitment to ensuring that children and families have access to affordable quality health care.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

JON RICHARDS  
State Representative  
Assembly District 19

SANDY PASCH  
State Representative  
Assembly District 22

BRETT HULSEY  
State Representative  
Assembly District 77

JON ERPENBACH  
State Senator  
Senate District 27

MARK MILLER  
State Senator  
Senate District 16

BOB JAUCH  
State Senator  
Senate District 25

DONNA SEIDEL  
State Representative  
Assembly District 85

TAMARA GRIGSBY  
State Representative  
Assembly District 18

CORY MASON  
State Representative  
Assembly District 62

LENA TAYLOR  
State Senator  
Senate District 4

JENNIFER SHILLING  
State Senator  
Senate District 32

CHRIS LARSON  
State Senator  
Senate District 7

TERESE BERCEAU  
State Representative  
Assembly District 76

GARY HEBL  
State Representative  
Assembly District 46

PENNY BERNARD SCHABER  
State Representative  
Assembly District 57

SPENCER COGGS  
State Senator  
Senate District 6

JESSICA KING  
State Senator  
Senate District 18

JULIE LASSA  
State Senator  
Senate District 24

MARK POCAN  
State Representative  
Assembly District 78

JANIS RINGHAND  
State Representative  
Assembly District 80

KELDA ROYS  
State Representative  
Assembly District 81

CHRISTINE SINICKI  
State Representative  
Assembly District 20

JOHN STEINBRINK  
State Representative  
Assembly District 65

CHRIS TAYLOR  
State Representative  
Assembly District 48

BARBARA TOLES  
State Representative  
Assembly District 17

ROBERT TURNER  
State Representative  
Assembly District 61

JOSH ZEPNICK  
State Representative  
Assembly District 9

LEON YOUNG  
State Representative  
Assembly District 16

cc: Victoria Wachino, Director, Family and Children's Health Programs Group  
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Governor Scott Walker

Dennis Smith, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Health Services