

The logo features a stylized sunburst or starburst design within a circular frame, set against a green square background.

Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

Barbara B. Kennelly, Chair

August 6, 2010

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO), a coalition of national not-for-profit organizations representing nearly 60 million older Americans, we urge you to vote in favor of the jobs/Medicaid/education package which will extend increased federal Medicaid matching rates (FMAP) for six months.

Without this extended fiscal relief, state policymakers will be forced to enact deep Medicaid cuts, including reductions in benefits and provider payment rates, as well as increases in cost sharing for beneficiaries. Such actions would be devastating to millions of seniors who rely on Medicaid as a lifeline for health care and long-term services and supports. An additional six months of federal matching funds will allow state Medicaid programs to maintain benefits for low-income seniors and provide further economic stimulus.

Failure to extend financial assistance to states will also have a devastating impact on jobs – which will further depress the economy for all. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, at least 29 states were counting on these extra Medicaid funds when they laid out their budgets for the upcoming fiscal year. Without this help, governors and state legislatures will need to take alternative actions to close their budget shortfalls. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that the impact of state budget cuts could cost the national economy 900,000 public- and private-sector jobs, including teachers, police officers, and firefighters.

We are disappointed that the crucial assistance this legislation will provide to Medicaid beneficiaries comes at the cost of reducing the assistance provided by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to families in need. We look forward to working with you on options to restore assistance to people who rely on the SNAP program after this bill is passed.

Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of millions of Americans who need help during this severe recession.

Sincerely,

AARP
AFL-CIO
AFSCME Retirees
Alliance for Retired Americans

American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
Association of BellTel Retirees, Inc.
Association of Jewish Aging Services of North America
B'nai B'rith International
Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.
Easter Seals
Families USA
Gray Panthers
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace
& Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
The Jewish Federations of North America
Lutheran Services in America
Medicare Rights Center
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging
National Association for Home Care and Hospice
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs
National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc.
The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Aging
National Indian Council on Aging
National Osteoporosis Foundation
OWL - The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
PHI - Quality Care through Quality Jobs
Visiting Nurse Associations of America
Volunteers of America
Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW)