

# Health Care for the Homeless Mobilizer

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council

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## How to Protect Medicaid This Week

The pressure on Medicaid, the nation's program of health insurance for the poor and disabled, continues to build. While a system of universal, comprehensive health insurance remains far preferable to the limited and structurally flawed Medicaid program, we who seek to end homelessness must defend Medicaid for the sake of the 52 million people who depend on it for medical coverage. 23% of HCH clients are Medicaid enrollees, and homelessness is averted for countless others by health services paid for by Medicaid.

Assaults on Medicaid are coming fast and furious. The unkindest cut is the federal reduction of Medicaid by \$10 billion over the next five years. This will play out in state budget and program decisions that will be experienced directly in the lives of our poorest neighbors and in the budgets of agencies that serve them. In a foretaste of what is to come, for example, Tennessee last week dropped 200,000 people from its rolls.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) is poised to launch the next attack on the program. NCSL will vote during its annual meeting on proposed Medicaid "reforms" that would, among other measures, allow for:

- Limited EPSDT benefits
- Increased co-payments and deductibles
- Block grants of long-term care funds

NCSL's full proposal is at <http://www.ncsl.org/statefed/health/MARefProp.htm> *Mobilizer* readers understand the importance of a comprehensive, mandatory package of health benefits for children (EPSDT), the impediment to health care posed by co-pays and deductibles, and the limitations of health care block grants. For more information on the Medicaid Program, please see the National Health Care for the Homeless Council's Policy Statement at <http://www.nhchc.org/Advocacy/PolicyPapers/2005/MedicaidSCHIPHomelessness.pdf> or the website of Families USA at [www.familiesusa.org](http://www.familiesusa.org).

On Wednesday, August 17, NCSL's Health Committee will vote on the proposal, which the Committee can amend. If passed, the proposal will then come before the full NCSL at its annual business meeting on Friday, August 19.

### ACTION:

- Contact legislators from your state who sit on the NCSL Health Committee (see list below), asking that they oppose provisions that would limit benefits, increase cost sharing, and create state long-term care block grants.

Members of the NCSL Health Committee:

AL: Baker, Barton, Grantland, McClurkin, Millican	Hammerstrong, Jacobs, Kahn, Newell
AK: Cissna, Coghill, Dyson, Elton, Rokeberg, Wilson	MN: Bradley, Higgins, Kiscaden, Lourey, Otremba, Samuelson, Schill, Tingelstad
AZ: Allen, Cannell	MT: Becker, Esp, Roberts, Squires
AR: Bookout, Crichter	NE: Byars, Cunningham, Howard, Hensen, Hohnson, Stuthman, Synowiecki
CA: Ortiz	NV: Cegavske, Hardy, Koivisto, Leslie, Mathews, Weber
CO: Hagedorn, Shaffer	NH: Batula, Clegg, Katsakiores, MacKay, Martel, Price
CT: Harp	NM: Heaton, Picraux, Zanetti
DE: Blevins, Sorenson, Still	NY: Hannon, Morhan
FL: Dawson, Peaden, Wilson	OH: Miller, Raussen, Smith, Wachtmann, White, Widener
GA: Unterman	OK: Cain
ID: Garrett, Henbest	OR: Anderson, Morrisette
IL: Bellock, Crotty, Hunter, Syverson, Trotter	PA: Corman, Kenney, Orie, Vance
IN: Becker, Breaux, Brown, Budak, Dillon, Giaquinta, miller, Riegsecker, Skinner, Welch	RI: Roberts
IA: Heaton, Ragan, Seymour, Smith, Tinsman	SC: Edge, Rice, Tripp
KS: Brungardt, Hill	SD: Boomgarden, Dempster, Frost, Hunhoff, Kraus, Miles, Sutton, Van Etten
KY: Burch, Denton, Draud, Graham, Jenkins, Nunn, Roeding, Westrom	TX: Farabee, Uresti
LA: Duran, Gautreaux, McPherson, Cheek, Walker	UT: Killpack
ME: Curley, Pingree	VA: Hamilton, Keister, Martin, Newan, Nixon
MD: Boutin, Donoghue, Goldwater, Greenip, hollinger, Kelley, Mandel, Oaks, Pendergrass	WA: Alexander, Bailey, Cmapbell, Cody, Keiser, Morrell, Schual-Berke
MA: Barrios, Chandler, Montigny, Moore, Tarr	WV: Foster, Leach, Prezioso, Unger
MI: Adamini, Gaffney, Gleason, Green,	WI: Gielow, Underheim
	WY: Hastert, Massie, Meuli, Scott

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