

October 4, 2017



To the New York State Congressional Delegation:

Our coalition of New York State consumers, health care and human service workers, and providers and insurers wrote to you several times during Congress' Affordable Care Act (ACA) repeal debate.

We were tremendously relieved when repeal plans were again put aside, and we strongly urge you to oppose any new repeal plan, including those like Cassidy-Graham that would result in significant net cuts to Medicaid funding for New York.

It's time to work together in a bipartisan way to improve New Yorkers' access to quality healthcare. The ongoing discussions in the Senate and House regarding extending funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is a huge step in the right direction. Extending CHIP funding would provide peace of mind for the families of 350,000 New York children that receive their insurance through CHIP. We urge you to make sure that an agreement on CHIP is enacted. In addition, with a number of other healthcare programs facing deadlines this fall, we ask you to continue this progress and act quickly to protect New York patients and providers from damaging consequences.

Specifically, Congress must:

**Prevent Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Reductions**

We are grateful that Congress has taken steps each of the last three years to pursue a moratorium on Medicaid DSH cuts, which began October 1 of this year. Medicaid DSH payments are a lifeline to safety net hospitals, enabling them to fulfill their mission to care for the uninsured and underinsured in their communities. If the cut were implemented, New York's Medicaid DSH allocation would be reduced by approximately \$330 million in FY 2018, with the reductions expected to increase each year until they reach nearly \$1 billion annually by 2022. We urge the Delegation to once again push for a two-year moratorium on Medicaid DSH cuts.

### **Reauthorize the Health Centers Fund**

The Health Centers Fund provides crucial support for Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) serving the most vulnerable. It expired on September 30 and must be reauthorized. Without action, health centers will face a devastating 70% cut in grant funds. New York's FQHCs stand to lose \$138 million in federal funding.

### **Fund the Cost-Sharing Reduction (CSR) Payments**

CSR funds under the ACA help those who need it most. In our state, this includes 700,000 people earning less than 200% of the Federal poverty level (FPL) who are enrolled in the State's Essential Plan, which is funded in part by CSRs; and approximately 65,000 earning between 200%-250% FPL who benefit from lower cost-sharing as a result of CSR payments made to health plans to subsidize coverage purchased via New York State of Health. Congress should end the uncertainty over these payments and fund the CSRs.

In addition to these immediate issues, we also urge consideration of several other pressing Medicare policies that must be extended. Several important provisions, including therapy cap exceptions and outreach funding for low-income Medicare beneficiaries, will also require bipartisan efforts before the calendar year ends.

While many of these proposals will require additional federal funding, we urge you to protect New York patients and providers from damaging "offsets" to help pay for them. New York's patients and providers have long been used as a "piggy bank" to pay for other priorities, and they simply can't sustain additional cuts.

We stand ready to work with you on these key issues.

Sincerely,

Greater New York Hospital Association  
Hospital Association of New York State  
Coalition New York State Public Health Plans  
Community Healthcare Association of New York State  
Coalition of Provider Associations (COPA)  
Cerebral Palsy Associations of NYS (CP of NYS)  
New York State Rehabilitation Association  
NYS Association of Community and Residential Agencies (NYSACRA)  
Leading Age New York  
Home Care Association of New York State  
Medical Society of the State of New York  
Medicare Rights Center  
Empire Justice Center  
Metro New York Health Care for All  
Consumers Union  
Children's Health Fund  
New York Statewide Senior Action Council  
UJA Federation New York  
Citizen Action of New York  
Medicaid Matters New York  
New York State AFL-CIO  
1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East  
New York State Nurses Association  
Doctors Council SEIU  
New York State United Teachers  
Communications Workers of America District 1  
Civil Service Employees Association  
District Council 37 AFSCME  
United University Professions  
Professional Staff Congress CUNY