

February 1, 2021

Dear Senator/Representative:

I write today to welcome you to the 117th Congress. The [Medicaid Health Plans of America \(MHPA\)](#) looks forward to being your trusted resource and a valued partner on federal Medicaid policy issues. Our health plan members work closely with state Medicaid agencies and other policymakers in serving more than 75 million Americans who rely on Medicaid for high-quality, coordinated, and comprehensive coverage. MHPA and our member health plans are committed to working with you and your staff to further strengthen the Medicaid program and its federal-state partnership during this important time in our nation's history.

MHPA is the only national trade association with a sole focus on Medicaid, representing more than 120 managed care organizations (MCOs) serving nearly 36 million Medicaid beneficiaries in 38 states. MHPA's members include both for-profit and non-profit, national and regional, as well as single-state health plans that compete in the Medicaid market. Nearly three-quarters of all Medicaid beneficiaries receive health care through MCOs, and our association provides research and advocacy services that support policy solutions to enhance the delivery and coordination of holistic, comprehensive, cost-effective, and quality health care service delivery for Medicaid enrollees.

Though the health and economic challenges facing the 117th Congress and the Biden Administration are unprecedented, MHPA stands ready to work with you on a comprehensive and ongoing federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as on other health issues of critical importance to the Medicaid population. Specifically, MHPA supports an additional Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) increase for all states that is urgently needed to address the dire economic and health consequences of the pandemic. Over the course of the last 12 months, enrollment in Medicaid and CHIP has increased by almost 6 million enrollees, and continued growth in enrollment is expected as COVID cases continue to surge over the winter months, further stressing our health care system and the economy. State economies and budgets are facing unprecedented stress, and without additional fiscal support, states will have no choice but to consider grave cuts to their Medicaid programs, hurting safety net providers and the beneficiaries they serve during a public health emergency, exacerbating public health issues and disparities impacting vulnerable populations. Also, history has demonstrated that enhanced FMAP assistance is the most efficient form of state fiscal relief during an economic downturn.

MHPA also supports legislative efforts to create a new state plan option to extend continuous Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) eligibility for 12 months postpartum. We also support other targeted improvements to maternity care that address gaps in maternal and infant health outcomes in the Medicaid program. Additional legislative priorities for our members include:

- Ensuring actuarial soundness and transparency in the state rate setting process,
- Addressing the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) by supporting more state flexibility and reimbursement opportunities for valuable interventions that can help address the disproportionate effects of race/ethnicity, gender, disability, income, pregnancy status and other factors, and

- Creating incentives for the states that have not yet taken advantage of the ACA's Medicaid expansion option to expand, perhaps through financial incentives and/or additional flexibilities using Medicaid Section 1115 waivers.

MHPA's member health plans passionately embrace a common mission to work with clinical and non-clinical stakeholders at the community level to achieve desirable health outcomes in a fiscally responsible manner serving America's most vulnerable citizens.

We look forward to connecting with and briefing you and your staff soon on our members' priorities. If you have any questions or would like additional information on Medicaid, managed care, our association, or would like to speak with me and my team, please contact Shannon Attanasio, Vice President, Government Relations and Advocacy at sattanasio@mhcpa.org.

Wishing you all the best as the 117th Congress begins.

Sincerely,



Craig A. Kennedy, MPH
President and CEO