

AFL-CIO

*American Academy of
Family Physicians*

*American Academy of
Pediatrics*

*American Congress of
Obstetricians and
Gynecologists*

*American Dental
Association*

*American Dental
Education Association*

*American Health Care
Association*

*America's Essential
Hospitals*

*Association for
Community Affiliated
Plans*

*Associations of Clinicians
for the Underserved*

*Catholic Health
Association of the United
States*

*Children's Hospital
Association*

Easter Seals

*The Jewish Federations
of North America*

*Medicaid Health Plans of
America*

*National Association of
Community Health
Centers*

*National Association of
Counties*

*National Association of
Pediatric Nurse
Practitioners*

*National Association of
Rural Health Clinics*

*National Council for
Behavioral Health*

*National Health Care for
the Homeless Council*

*National Hispanic
Medical Association*

*National Rural Health
Association*



THE PARTNERSHIP FOR MEDICAID

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President, Speaker Boehner, Rep. Pelosi, and Sens. McConnell and Reid:

As we approach the 50th anniversary of President Lyndon B. Johnson signing Medicare and Medicaid into law, The Partnership for Medicaid and a bipartisan group of **XXX** national and state leaders ask that you join us in recognizing Medicaid's strongly positive impact on the health of our people and nation.

The Partnership comprises 23 national organizations that represent physicians and other providers, hospitals, clinics, health plans, counties and labor. Joining the Partnership on this letter are **XXX** members of Congress and **XXX** former lawmakers; **XXX** former cabinet secretaries and **XXX** former administrators; **XXX** current and former governors; **XXX** current and former state Medicaid directors; and **XXX** national organizations dedicated to improving the health of all people.

For half a century, Medicaid has been a lifeline of support for countless millions of individuals and families across the United States. It has been there when people face life's most difficult circumstances—serious illness, long-term disability, life-threatening injuries—and it has provided a solid foundation for well-being by covering preventive screenings and primary care services. Medicaid fills the gaps in health coverage that frequently occur in people's lives, helping them transition through life events that would otherwise leave them uninsured.

Turning 50 is a great time to take stock and assess. What has Medicaid come to mean after half a century, and how has it improved the lives of the individuals and families it serves?

Medicaid is a Part of Americans' Lives

Since President Johnson signed Medicaid into law in 1965, it has evolved from a program designed to serve the health care needs of low-income women and their

children to one that cares for nearly one in five Americans. They include seniors in need of long-term services and supports, people living with disabilities, teenagers and young adults in foster care, and other children, adolescents and adults. Medicaid's impact is broad: It has touched the lives of nearly two-thirds of all Americans, either directly or through care for a family member or friend.

Medicaid Helps Working Families

The majority of adults with Medicaid are employed and pay taxes, but work in low-wage jobs for small firms or service industries that typically don't offer health insurance. Also, the average adult with Medicaid spends only a portion of any given year enrolled in the program, and children with Medicaid coverage live healthier and more productive lives as adults than similarly disadvantaged children without access to the program. Medicaid also helps the economy, especially in rural communities, by supporting vital health care jobs at hospitals, health centers, and other safety net providers, and by keeping workers healthy and on the job.

Medicaid Gives States Flexibility to Innovate

Medicaid is unique in its design as a federal and state program. Thanks to its extraordinary flexibility, it has allowed states to test innovative new ways to fund care for those in need. State Medicaid programs have truly been laboratories of change for the better in American health care. States have used the flexibility of Medicaid waivers to expand access to home and community-based services that make independent living and community integration possible for people with disabilities and low-income elderly. In fact, since Medicaid was enacted, every state has been granted at least one waiver and most have received several.

Medicaid is a Solid Investment

Medicaid accomplishes much more than many people know. Combining a federal guarantee of coverage with state-based innovation and flexibility helps guard the health of people when they need it most while building a more responsive, patient-centered and effective health care system. Medicaid is efficient, as well. Even during one of the nation's worst economic downturns since the Great Depression, 2007 to 2011, Medicaid medical service spending per enrollee grew only 2.3 percent annually—significantly slower than the rate of growth for private insurance. And like American employers, Medicaid looks to managed care for even greater efficiency, with more than half of those covered enrolled in a managed care plan.

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicaid to remind people of the breadth and depth of support and appreciation America's leaders have for this vital program. Since 1965, Medicaid has proved its value to the people and communities it serves—and to taxpayers. And Medicaid will continue to evolve, while maintaining its role as a lifeline that, one day, many of us might need.

As we celebrate the first half-century of Medicaid's contributions to our nation's health, let's work together to preserve and strengthen this program for the next 50 years.

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signers list