



September 8, 2005

The Honorable Richard B. Cheney
Vice President
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Hurricane Disaster Relief Assistance for States

Dear Vice President Cheney:

The American Public Human Services Association and our affiliate, the National Association of State Medicaid Directors, encourage you to consider the following recommendations as part of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. We urge you to develop a solution that builds on the initial steps that you have taken that allow for the thousands of displaced residents to be cared for away from their home states while holding the host states harmless. This letter focuses solely on the states' initial concerns regarding Medicaid reimbursement and eligibility.

First, we urge you to reimburse states that accept evacuees of Hurricane Katrina at 100 percent for the cost of providing Medicaid services. The 100 percent match rate should be for both the cost of care as well as the administrative costs of the program. Without this coverage, states would likely assume millions of dollars in additional state funds to meet the matching requirements on Medicaid services for storm victims.

In addition, we recommend that you provide eligibility for all evacuees, not just the categorically eligible evacuees. States are concerned that this technicality may get lost if it is not dealt with explicitly. States have raised concerns about how to deal with those new to Medicaid who may have serious health problems right now, do not have dependent children, and do not have the medical records or the time to document actual disability.

Finally, we urge you to consider postponing the transition from Medicaid to Medicare low-income Part D benefits in states most affected until the transition to Part D can be managed without the loss of drug coverage.

We will continue to forward suggestions from states regarding the Medicaid program and look forward to working with you. Additional comments will be forthcoming from our organizations on other human service programs. Thank you for considering these priorities as you responds to this overwhelming national disaster.

Sincerely,

Jerry Friedman
Executive Director

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Nancy Atkins
Chair
National Association of State Medicaid Directors



September 8, 2005

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Hurricane Disaster Relief Assistance for States

Dear Senator Reid:

The American Public Human Services Association and our affiliate, the National Association of State Medicaid Directors, encourage you to consider the following recommendations as part of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. We urge you to develop a solution that builds on the initial steps that you have taken that allow for the thousands of displaced residents to be cared for away from their home states while holding the host states harmless. This letter focuses solely on the states' initial concerns regarding Medicaid reimbursement and eligibility.

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Nancy Atkins
Chair
National Association of State Medicaid Directors



September 8, 2005

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Hurricane Disaster Relief Assistance for States

Dear Speaker Hastert:

The American Public Human Services Association and our affiliate, the National Association of State Medicaid Directors, encourage you to consider the following recommendations as part of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. We urge you to develop a solution that builds on the initial steps that you have taken that allow for the thousands of displaced residents to be cared for away from their home states while holding the host states harmless. This letter focuses solely on the states' initial concerns regarding Medicaid reimbursement and eligibility.

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Nancy Atkins
Chair
National Association of State Medicaid Directors



September 8, 2005

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Hurricane Disaster Relief for States

Dear Minority Leader Pelosi:

The American Public Human Services Association and our affiliate, the National Association of State Medicaid Directors, encourage you to consider the following recommendations as part of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. We urge you to develop a solution that builds on the initial steps that you have taken that allow for the thousands of displaced residents to be cared for away from their home states while holding the host states harmless. This letter focuses solely on the states' initial concerns regarding Medicaid reimbursement and eligibility.

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