

**LCAO supports FMAP extension**

*Edward F. Coyle, Chair*

March 11, 2004

Dear Senator:

The undersigned members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) are writing in support of Senator Rockefeller's amendment to create a deficit neutral reserve fund that will permit Congress to consider extension of the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) beyond June 30, 2004.

The Medicaid program plays an essential role in providing health coverage and long-term care to our nation's most vulnerable citizens, including millions of seniors and people with disabilities. According to a January 2004 Kaiser Family Foundation report, the enhanced FMAP in the FY 2003 budget helped 42 states meet the funding increases in their Medicaid programs by resolving budget shortfalls. Twenty-seven states used the fiscal relief to avoid, minimize or postpone Medicaid cuts or freezes.

States are still experiencing severe budget shortfalls and will face increased costs with the new Medicare prescription drug law scheduled to begin in 2006. The current enhanced FMAP expires on June 30, 2004. This reduction in funding will mean cuts that could result in millions of seniors and people with disabilities losing their much needed health care supports and services. Extending the FMAP will help mitigate these cuts and help the people who rely on Medicaid to maintain their health coverage.

Thank you for any help you can provide in ensuring that Congress has the option, through further temporary budgetary help for Medicaid, to prevent an increase in the number of uninsured.

Sincerely,

AFSCME Retiree Program  
Alliance for Retired Americans  
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging  
American Federation of Teachers Program on Retirement and Retirees  
American Public Health Association  
American Society of Consultant Pharmacists  
Association for Gerontology and Human Development  
in Historically Black Colleges and Universities  
Association of Jewish Aging Services of North America  
Catholic Health Association  
FamiliesUSA  
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys  
International Union, UAW  
National Adult Day Services Association  
National Association for Home Care and Hospice  
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
National Association of Retired Federal Employees  
National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc.

National Citizens Coalition for Nursing Home Reform  
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare  
National Council on the Aging  
National Indian Council on Aging  
National Senior Citizens Law Center  
OWL, the voice of midlife and older women  
United Jewish Communities  
Volunteers of America