February 17, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer  The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader  Minority Leader
U.S. Senate  U.S. Senate
S-221 Capitol  S-203 Capitol
Washington, DC  20510  Washington, DC  20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker  Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives  U.S. House of Representatives
H-222 Capitol  H-2-4 Capitol
Washington, DC  20515  Washington, DC  20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge our country, and the discovery of new virus variants reminds us that there is significant work to be done before we overcome this once in a lifetime health care crisis. Our organizations look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the 80 million people in America that rely on the Medicaid program have continued access to affordable, high quality health coverage and care.

Throughout this 2-year pandemic, the Medicaid program has provided essential health care coverage and services to more than 80 million low-income, vulnerable people that would otherwise not be able to afford insurance. However, we recognize that as the pandemic wears on, the strain placed on the Medicaid program has been building. While predictability in funding and enrollment is critical to operating state Medicaid programs, our organizations believe that any precipitous termination of the enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) and continuous eligibility/Maintenance of Effort (MOE) provisions included in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which included significant safeguards to protect Medicaid beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic, could lead to dangerous and unnecessary gaps in coverage and care.

As Congress and the administration begin to look toward unwinding these emergency programs, we believe that sufficient notice is needed for states, health plans and providers to collaboratively engage with Medicaid enrollees to make them aware of the issue and to assist them in avoiding dangerous and unnecessary gaps in coverage and care. As such, we respectfully request that Congress provide at least a 120-day lead time before unwinding the FMAP/MOE provisions of the FFCRA so that
enrollees have sufficient time to either re-establish their eligibility for Medicaid or determine their eligibility for subsidized coverage in the state or federally facilitated Marketplaces. We also note that the simultaneous processing of millions of eligibility determinations will prove operationally challenging for states, health plans, and providers who will see millions of individuals who otherwise remain eligible for Medicaid become uninsured unless sufficient time is allowed to avoid unnecessary lapses in coverage.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We are available to serve as a resource to you on this and other issues of importance to the Medicaid program.

Sincerely,

American Health Care Association/ National Center for Assisted Living
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
America’s Health Insurance Plans
Children’s Hospital Association
Medicaid Health Plans of America
National Association of Community Health Centers
National Association of Medicaid Directors
National Council for Mental Wellbeing