



41 State Street • Suite 900  
Albany, NY 12207  
518.462.2293  
www.nyhpa.org

## NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:**  
[Leslie S. Moran](#)  
(518) 462-2293  
(518) 588-6655 (cell)

### **NEW YORK HEALTH PLAN ASSOCIATION ON ONE-HOUSE BUDGET PROPOSALS**

*Statement by Eric Linzer, HPA President and CEO*

“We applaud the Senate and Assembly one house budgets for rejecting the Executive’s proposal to reduce the number of Medicaid plans for our state’s most vulnerable residents. Eliminating these plans will take away options from more than 5.5 million New Yorkers. This would force hundreds of thousands of low-income New Yorkers to move from their current health plan, disrupting services for patients and the providers that care for them. The Senate and Assembly proposals will protect the choices available for New Yorkers who rely on the Medicaid program and urge that this provision is rejected in the final FY23 state budget.

“Additionally, we commend the Assembly’s and Senate’s proposal to provide coverage to low-income, uninsured immigrants. This is an important step in furthering the goal of achieving universal coverage and we support its inclusion in the final FY23 state budget.

“We appreciate that both the Assembly and Senate restored the quality pools in the Medicaid Managed Care and Managed Long Term Care programs that the Governor had proposed. This funding is critical to advancing quality improvement efforts and reducing health disparities, and urge its inclusion in the final budget.

“We are opposed to the Senate’s proposal mandating health plans reimburse retail pharmacies at the fee-for-service dispensing fee rate and urge its rejection from the budget. This proposal would cut rates to health plans and do nothing to enhance pharmacy services to the Medicaid program or address the true challenge of regulating drug prices increases: reigning in Big Pharma.

“The final budget should also include funding to offset the federal requirement that health plans provide coverage of over-the-counter COVID tests. The state’s health plans have worked to protect patients, support our partners in the delivery system, and assist employers throughout the pandemic. As these costs were not factored into commercial premium rates, policymakers should utilize a portion of the federal funding provided to New York to offset COVID testing costs to defray the unanticipated expenses health plans have incurred.”