



February 28, 2024

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senate Majority Leader  
 Room 907, LOB  
 Albany, NY 12247

Hon. Carl Heastie, Assembly Speaker  
 Room 932, LOB  
 Albany, NY 12248

Dear Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie:

On behalf of a broad group of stakeholders from across the state representing community groups, nonprofits, providers, social service organizations, and employers, we are writing to express our opposition to the Governor’s proposal (Part H of A.8807/S.8307), requiring the Department of Health to procure nearly the entire Medicaid managed care program and select at least two plans per region.

This proposal will reduce the number of health plans in the Medicaid program, taking away choices from patients and creating havoc in the delivery system, while undercutting efforts to advance health equity, reduce health disparities, and enhance care coordination envisioned in the recently approved 1115 Medicaid Waiver. We urge you to reject this proposal.

More than 5 million New Yorkers rely on Medicaid managed care plans for their care. Many of these individuals are among the state's most at-risk residents, with multiple health conditions that require coordination of numerous services. This includes both physical health and mental health care, long-term services and supports, as well as help coordinating social services, such as housing, employment, education, and food access.

Eliminating health plans from the Medicaid program will require hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers to select a new plan, causing confusion for vulnerable patients and disrupting their care if they have to change providers. The state should not make accessing care more difficult for individuals with complex health needs by causing them to change doctors if their current plan is eliminated under this proposal. Further, Part H will leave fewer options available for communities of color, undermining efforts to address racial and ethnic disparities in care.

Part H also will take away resources from other critical health priorities. This includes the significant state investments needed to implement the recently approved 1115 Medicaid Waiver, intended to advance equity and increase the quality of care in Medicaid, as well as the ongoing process to recertify eligibility of Medicaid members as the public health emergency unwind continues, which is critical to ensuring that low-income New Yorkers remain covered. Further, health plans that are not chosen as part of the proposed procurement will be forced to layoff staff or close completely, exacerbating the challenges to the State's economy and making it more difficult to replace those jobs in some regions of the state.

Two years ago, the Legislature rejected a similar proposal, in part, because of the impact it would have on the communities these plans serve and the patients who depend on them for their care. We urge you to protect patient choice for vulnerable New Yorkers who rely on the Medicaid program by rejecting inclusion of the procurement provisions in Part H in your one-house budget resolutions and opposing it in the final FY25 State Budget.

Sincerely,

Albany Community Action Partnership  
Albany Damien Center  
Bethesda House  
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Capital Area  
Bronx Chamber of Commerce  
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce  
Buffalo Center for Health Equity  
Buffalo Pre-natal Perinatal Network  
Capital District Latinos  
Capital Roots  
CARES of NY  
Catholic Charities Care Coordination Services  
Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association  
Comfort Food Community  
Commission on Economic Opportunity  
Committed Home Care  
Community Living Advocates  
Equinox

Family Promise of the Capital Region  
Fort Hudson Health System  
Freedom Care  
HCR Home Care  
Homeless and Travelers Aid Society  
Horizon Home Care Services Inc.  
Joseph's House & Shelter  
Mom Starts Here  
North Country Home Services  
Northern Rivers  
Open Door Family Medical Centers  
Public Health Solutions  
St. Catherine's Center for Children  
St. Paul's Center  
Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region  
Unity House  
YWCA of the Greater Capital Region