

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. House of Representatives today overwhelmingly approved legislation - the Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act - to impose a one-year moratorium on Medicaid regulations proposed by the Bush Administration that threaten services for 650,000 Marylanders enrolled in Medicaid, and would result in the loss of approximately \$67 million in Medicaid payments to the State.

“This legislation protects beneficiaries, providers and states from harmful regulatory changes that would undermine the Medicaid safety-net and imperil critical services for hundreds of thousands of Maryland beneficiaries,” **stated Rep. Steny Hoyer.** “At a time when the economy is significantly slowing down, it makes no sense to implement changes that compromise a program serving those families who are most in need.”

Over the past several months, the Bush Administration has announced seven changes to Medicaid that reverse longstanding policies and eliminate federal payments for a variety of critical Medicaid functions. The House-passed legislation imposes a moratorium on the new rules until March 2009, and establishes an independent review on the effects of these proposed changes prior to the moratorium's expiration.

Perhaps the most damaging regulatory change for Maryland is one pertaining to case management services, intended to help the elderly, children with special needs, and persons with disabilities gain access to the full spectrum of health care and support services. That rule alone, which went into effect on March 3, threatens as many as 200,000 Maryland beneficiaries and \$60 million in Medicaid funding for the State. Also at risk in Maryland are rehabilitative services for more than 30,000, \$7 million for training medical providers, and the ability of the State to coordinate with schools and local health departments on the delivery of services.

In addition to enjoying strong bipartisan support in Congress, the moratorium is supported by Governors in all 50 states. [Governor Martin O'Malley joined a multi-state lawsuit filed against the Bush Administration](#) challenging the new regulations. Earlier this month, Maryland's Medicaid Director, John Folkemer, testified before the Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health about the adverse impact the rule changes would have on the State.

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