

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 10, 2017

Mr. Andy Slavitt
Acting Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Acting Administrator Slavitt:

As members of the North Carolina congressional delegation, we are writing in strong support of the Alternative Benefit State Plan Amendment to expand Medicaid that the State of North Carolina intends to submit to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) later this month.

North Carolina has a long history of pioneering Medicaid delivery programs. Its current model, Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC), has been nationally recognized as one of the most innovative and cost-effective Medicaid programs in the country. As a result of this award-winning model, North Carolina has the lowest Medicaid spending growth rate in the nation, and more than 90 percent of the state's physicians participate in the program.

Unfortunately, the North Carolina General Assembly has refused to extend the benefits of CCNC to almost 650,000 additional beneficiaries. North Carolina is one of only nineteen states that have refused to take advantage of the Medicaid expansion provision of the Affordable Care Act since January 1, 2014. Of those nineteen states, North Carolina is home to more potential beneficiaries of Medicaid expansion than nearly every state outside Florida and Texas.

There is little question that the General Assembly, in restricting access to health care for North Carolina's most vulnerable populations, acted out of partisan ideology rather than concern for good governance. Between 500 and 1,000 North Carolinians die preventable deaths each year, which could be avoided if those individuals had access to Medicaid screenings and preventive health care services. Refusing to expand Medicaid is also poor fiscal policy: instead of spending \$330 million on uncompensated care costs annually, our state could be receiving \$4 billion in federal support.

In addition to providing new access to care and saving millions in uncompensated care costs, expanding Medicaid in North Carolina would create tens of thousands of new jobs and help streamline care delivery at our state's hospitals, many of which have been struggling to provide care to those without insurance. In particular, rural hospitals and associated economies would benefit from expansion, especially those hospitals suffering from severe financial distress and potential closure as a result of reductions in Medicare and Medicaid payments. Given the federal government's responsibility for the bulk of expansion costs, the State's refusal to expand Medicaid has been just as inexplicable as it is irresponsible.

The State Plan Amendment will result in broader coverage, increased access to care, and improved health outcomes for the Medicaid population. We are pleased and confident that Governor Cooper has acted within his authority to submit this plan to the federal government. Individuals, hospitals, providers, insurers, taxpayers, and the state budget will all benefit from expansion. We strongly urge you to support the state's proposal to strengthen and expand North Carolina's current Medicaid system.

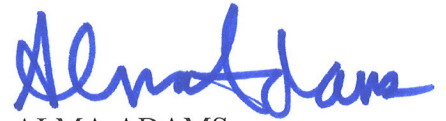
Sincerely,



DAVID PRICE
Member of Congress



G. K. BUTTERFIELD
Member of Congress



ALMA ADAMS
Member of Congress

cc: Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
Vikki Wachino, Director, Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, CMS
Roy Cooper, Governor, State of North Carolina