

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) voted with a bipartisan majority in the U.S. House of Representatives today to halt regulations imposed by the Administration which would slash federal Medicaid funding by as much as \$4.8 billion to New York hospitals and health systems over the next five years.

“During times of economic uncertainty the last thing we need is someone taking a chainsaw to the safety net of millions of Americans,” **said Arcuri**. “The Administration’s cuts would harm children, individuals with disabilities and low income families across New York by seriously restricting the ability of the Medicaid program to operate – dumping costs onto states already struggling with rising budget deficits.”

The bipartisan Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act (H.R. 5613) places a moratorium until March 2009 on seven Administration-imposed Medicaid regulations which would cut funding to states for vital programs and services by about \$18 billion nationwide over the next five years. The bill also establishes an independent review of these regulations and provides \$25 million to the Department of Health and Human Services each year to fight fraud and abuse in the Medicaid program.

Elected officials, community leaders and health care advocates throughout New York have repeatedly condemned these regulation changes because of the drastic impact they would have on services and programs across the state. Arcuri was joined by the entire New York delegation in the House of Representatives in cosponsoring this legislation.

Over the past year, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued seven new regulations that would eliminate federal payments for a variety of critical Medicaid services. The rules in question would cut funding for: public safety-net institutions; coverage of rehabilitation services for people with disabilities; outreach and enrollment in schools as well as specialized medical transportation to school for children covered by Medicaid; graduate medical education payments; coverage of hospital clinic services; case management services that allow people with disabilities to remain in the community; state provider tax laws; and appeals filed through Health and Human Services.

New York State is the premiere provider of medical education in the country, meaning the elimination of payments for graduate medical education would hit New York’s health care

system as well as its economy. New York State's 11 academic medical centers, 56 major teaching hospitals, and 42 minor teaching hospitals train roughly 17 percent of the country's physicians. Eliminating Medicaid funding for graduate medical education would also reduce the number of providers with the skills and training to care for the special needs of Medicaid beneficiaries. The Health Care Association of New York estimates that that New York would lose \$600 million per year in federal funds if this regulation were implemented.

H.R. 5613 is fully paid for, including extending an electronic asset verification demonstration for Medicaid applicants and beneficiaries.

Overall, the bill is supported by all 50 governors and more than 2,000 organizations, including the National Governors Association, National Association of Counties, American Hospital Association, National Association of Medicaid Directors, National Association of Mental Health Program Directors, AARP, American Academy of Pediatrics, and National Public Health Association.

This year, Arcuri was named one of the year's "Best Representatives for Children" in the Children's Defense Fund Action Council's (CDFAC) 2007 Nonpartisan Congressional Scorecard, which grades every Member of Congress based on key votes affecting children.

Since taking office, Arcuri has voted repeatedly for legislation to provide health care to over 10 million children nationwide, including 396,042 children currently enrolled in New York's SCHIP program (CHPlus).

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