

The Honorable Mike Crapo
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

8/5/2020

Dear Senator Crapo,

At a time when access to critical and life-saving medical services is paramount for our neighbors, friends, and relatives, investing in Medicaid is more important than ever in improving Idaho's health and economic well-being. We applaud the passage of the three previous coronavirus relief packages by Congress. However, the much needed emergency funding and policy provisions do not fully meet the ongoing needs of the Idaho's Medicaid program and health care providers.

We urge you to take action to promote affordable health coverage and support Idaho's struggling economy by:

- 1. Increasing the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to 14 percentage points**
- 2. And extending the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) provision in the next federal coronavirus relief package.**

To ensure these policy solutions result in the long-term protection of Idaho's health coverage and state budget, these provisions must be kept in place until the labor market recovers.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act passed in March includes important provisions to protect Idahoans and ensure health coverage is not lost in the midst of the health crisis and resulting recession. One specific provision within the act, the MOE, provides protection to thousands of eligible Idahoans from losing health coverage and reduces unnecessary and burdensome red tape on state administrators. The act also increased states' FMAP by 6.2 percentage points for the duration of the public health emergency. For Idaho, this means an additional \$480 million in federal Medicaid dollars over 18 months.

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, Idaho is experiencing all-time high unemployment, declining family incomes, and increasing enrollment in Medicaid. Our state budget is getting squeezed as revenue drops, and Idaho's governor implemented a five percent cut to state budgets – with more significant cuts expected in the coming year. Cuts to Medicaid would devastate Idaho health care providers, Idahoans receiving crucial health services, and families already suffering the economic pitfalls brought on by the pandemic. Raising the FMAP and extending the MOE will provide needed fiscal relief to Idaho. With the additional aid, Idaho could better cover gaps in the state budget that would otherwise become cuts to essential services.

As members of our state's Congressional Delegation, you are in the unique position to help Idaho families and communities in this time of crisis. Now is not the time for states to consider Medicaid cuts, nor to make it more bureaucratically complex. By boosting the FMAP and extending the MOE in the next federal relief package, you can protect access to quality care for hundreds of thousands of Idahoans during these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,



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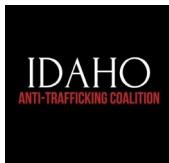
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