

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Schwartz, Brady, Fattah, Cartwright Call on CMS to Not Allow Gov. Tom Corbett to Hurt Women's Access to Health Care

Washington, D.C. – As the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) considers Gov. Tom Corbett's alternative to expanding traditional Medicaid, Democratic members of Pennsylvania's congressional delegation urged the agency to protect access to family planning services and providers. In a letter to Cindy Mann, Medicaid director at CMS, the delegation members expressed concern that the governor's proposal restricts the legal right of Medicaid enrollees to choose their family planning providers.

Rep. Allyson Y. Schwartz (PA-13) led the letter with Reps. Robert A. Brady (PA-01), Chaka Fattah (PA-02) and Matt Cartwright (PA-17). A PDF copy of the signed letter is available [here](http://schwartz.house.gov/sites/schwartz.house.gov/files/Healthy%20PA%20Letter%2C%204-11-14.pdf) (<http://schwartz.house.gov/sites/schwartz.house.gov/files/Healthy%20PA%20Letter%2C%204-11-14.pdf>), and the full text is enclosed below.

Schwartz said, "Governor Corbett should have acted months ago to expand Medicaid to 500,000 Pennsylvanians who lack affordable health coverage. Instead, his misguided proposal seeks to skirt existing federal protections by preventing Pennsylvania women from having access to the full range of family planning services and the provider of their choice. "

Brady said, "Pennsylvania's women deserve access to a full range of healthcare options. We are calling on CMS to make sure that newly eligible women in Pennsylvania are not treated like second class citizens in Medicaid expansion."

"It is in the best interest of all Pennsylvanians that the Governor's alternative plan includes and protects access to family planning services and providers," **Fattah said**. "In order to create a healthy Pennsylvania, we must ensure that all our residents have access to quality, affordable, and comprehensive healthcare options. I strongly encourage CMS to ensure this proposal meets the high bar that federal law requires underneath the traditional Medicaid program."

Rather than expanding traditional Medicaid, Gov. Corbett's proposal seeks to use billions of federal Medicaid expansion dollars to subsidize private health insurance policies for newly eligible individuals. Under federal law, coverage financed with Medicaid funds must include all of the family planning services afforded through traditional Medicaid. The law also states that Medicaid beneficiaries are free to seek care from any qualified Medicaid provider.

Gov. Corbett's plan, however, seeks to bypass these critical federal protections by restricting beneficiaries' family planning services and providers to those included in the network of private plans.

The full text of the letter follows:

April 11, 2014

Cindy Mann

Deputy Administrator

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Director

Center for Medicare, CHIP and Survey and Certification

7500 Security Boulevard

Baltimore, MD 21244-1850

Dear Ms. Mann:

As members of the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation, we write to request that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services clarify the terms and conditions of the Healthy Pennsylvania waiver to ensure access to family planning services and providers. We have significant concerns that this proposal would unacceptably limit beneficiaries' access to family planning services.

Instead of simply expanding traditional Medicaid, the Healthy Pennsylvania proposal uses Medicaid funds to purchase private coverage for the newly-eligible population. By statute, coverage financed with Medicaid funds must include all of the family planning services afforded through the traditional Medicaid program. In addition, Federal law requires that Medicaid enrollees have freedom of choice in selecting family planning providers so that they can access needed services from any qualified Medicaid provider. Congress enacted these protections to ensure that citizens' income does not interfere with their ability to access critical family planning services that improve the health of women and children.

Governor Tom Corbett's Healthy Pennsylvania proposal, however, seeks to circumvent these important federal protections. It confines beneficiary access to family planning services and providers to those included in the networks of private plans.

We must ensure that women who become newly eligible for coverage are able to access essential family planning services in a timely manner from providers they trust. We commend CMS on its dedication to ensuring that citizens have access to needed care and urge the agency to remain firm in protecting Medicaid beneficiaries' access to family planning services.

Sincerely,

Allyson Y. Schwartz

Robert A. Brady

Chaka Fattah

Matt Cartwright