

NGA News Release

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GOVERNORS RELEASE HEALTH CARE SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

WASHINGTON—The nation’s governors, in Washington, D.C., for the National Governors Association Winter Meeting, today delivered health care recommendations to the President and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The recommendations, developed by the Health Care Sustainability Task Force (Task Force), were presented and adopted by governors over the weekend. The Task Force focused on state innovations that require the redesign of health care delivery and payment systems with the objectives of improving quality and controlling costs.

The Task Force report identified areas where federal action is necessary to reduce barriers and further support state initiatives. Recommendations focused on streamlining and expediting Medicaid waivers and the state plan amendments review process; improving and coordinating quality of care for dual eligibles (individuals who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid); improving long-term services and supports; and increasing flexibility and investment from the federal government to facilitate payment and delivery reform through innovative performance partnerships.

“Governors across the country face significant challenges in our efforts to ensure the sustainability of health care programs amid rapidly rising health care costs,” said **Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber**, M.D., co-chair of the task force. “Linking the principles of flexibility and accountability, governors are exploring various alternatives to transform our health care system.”

“State health programs are driving innovation in the delivery and payment of services by testing new models for health care transformation that aim to lower the trajectory of health care spending while improving quality and outcomes,” said task force co-chair **Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam**. “This report strengthens these efforts and outlines ways the federal government can reduce barriers and further support the work of states.”

In addition to Haslam and Kitzhaber, governors on the Task Force include **Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley**, **Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe**, **California Gov. Jerry Brown**, **New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez**, **New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo**, **South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard**, **Utah Gov. Gary Herbert** and **Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin**. Former NGA Health and Homeland Security Chair **Maryland Gov. Martin O’Malley** and **Vice Chair Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval** serve as ex-officio members.

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