

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 27, 2017

The Honorable Bruce Rauner
Governor of the State of Illinois
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Rauner:

Late last week, Senate Republicans unveiled their bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Dubbed the “Better Care Reconciliation Act” (BCRA), this bill is largely similar to the House-passed American Health Care Act (AHCA). As you are no doubt aware, these proposals would throw more than 22 million people (including approximately one million Illinoisans) off their health insurance, decimate the Medicaid program, increase costs for older Americans and those living in rural communities, impose huge new financial burdens on hospitals (resulting in 60,000 job losses in our state alone), and undermine protections for individuals with pre-existing conditions. All this in order to provide more than \$540 billion in tax breaks for big businesses and wealthy individuals. We are writing again, and with fading hope, that you might finally answer some of our questions regarding how these proposals would impact Illinois patients, students, providers, and hospitals.

It is not unreasonable to request that a sitting Governor provide input or an analysis about how proposed federal legislation might impact their state, especially when the legislation would impact every single person in this country and one-sixth of our nation’s economy. Which is why we have, on multiple occasions, requested information from you about how these bills would impact our state. As Illinois’s current Governor, you must know that the proposed Medicaid changes included in both the House and Senate repeal bills would impact our state disproportionately—as federal Medicaid funding accounts for nearly 70 percent of all federal funding to the state’s budget. And yet, despite sending you numerous letters on these topics over the past six months, we have received nothing but silence.

You have a responsibility to outline how this legislation will impact Illinois before it receives a vote in the United States Senate. To clear up any uncertainty regarding how this bill would affect our state, we ask you the following questions again:

- 1) If you remain on as Illinois Governor, would you seek state waivers—as allowed under both the House and Senate repeal bills—from the “essential health benefits” requirement, once again allowing insurance companies to deny coverage of mental health care, substance abuse treatment, maternity and newborn care, hospitalizations, and prescription drugs?
- 2) If the Medicaid changes included in either the House or Senate repeal bills became law, would Illinois be able to cover the increased costs—in both the short- and long-term—without reducing coverage, restricting eligibility, limiting benefits, or cutting provider payments?
- 3) Under both the House and Senate repeal bills, Illinois’s Medicaid expansion—currently benefitting 650,000 individuals—would be terminated in 2021. Would the state be able to ensure that these individuals—slated to lose their Medicaid coverage—see no gap in

coverage, no diminishment of coverage, and no increased cost-sharing for health care coverage?

- 4) If either the House or Senate repeal bills became law—and the dramatic funding reductions for the Medicaid expansion population and the block grant/per-capita cap structure were realized—would the state be financially able to implement its proposed Section 1115 Medicaid waiver? How would the state balance funding new requested authorities under the proposed waiver while maintaining coverage of existing required services under the state’s Medicaid program?
- 5) How would the Medicaid funding reductions included in both the House and Senate repeal bills impact services provided to children in our schools, including the 280,000 disabled Illinois children with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and the 1.5 million children in Illinois who receive health care through the Medicaid program?
- 6) How would the Medicaid funding reductions included in both the House and Senate repeal bills impact funding for Illinois’s municipally-owned hospitals, health clinics, correctional facilities, and other publically-funded facilities?
- 7) How would the Medicaid funding reductions included in both the House and Senate repeal bills impact Illinois’s hospitals statewide, especially our critical access hospitals and those in rural and under-served areas?
- 8) Which proposals in the American Health Care Act and/or the Better Care Reconciliation Act do you believe will hurt Illinoisans and which did you believe will benefit our constituents?

While we were pleased to see that a bipartisan group of governors from Medicaid expansion states—Ohio, Colorado, Montana, Massachusetts, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana—sent a letter to Senate leadership last week, outlining their main concerns and priorities with respect to our health care system, we remain deeply disappointed that you have not yet weighed in on behalf of Illinoisans. There is still time to do so, despite the fact that congressional Republicans are attempting to ram these dangerous repeal bills through both the House and Senate as quickly as possible.

We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator