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March 20, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Speaker Johnson, Democratic Leader Schumer, and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

As the Senate and House continue to work on the Fiscal Year 2025 budget resolution, I am writing on behalf of the Emergency Nurses Association and our nearly 45,000 members to urge Congress to protect Medicaid and other health care programs that are critically important to emergency health care and our nation's emergency departments.

As you know, Medicaid is the largest health care insurance program in the United States. According to estimates of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), approximately 85 million people were enrolled in Medicaid in 2022, providing coverage for 1 in 5 Americans and nearly half of all children. It primarily serves low-income children, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities.

The impact of Medicaid is even more pronounced in our nation's emergency departments. Medicaid is the single most important health insurance program for Americans seeking care in emergency departments, providing coverage for over 45 percent of visits for people under 65. Among children, 63 percent of emergency department visits are covered by Medicaid.

As a critical program for the economically disadvantaged and disabled populations, Medicaid provides access to comprehensive, high-quality health care for tens of millions of Americans. Cuts to this program will limit access to primary care, forcing patients who lose coverage to delay needed treatments and rely more heavily on already overburdened and overcrowded emergency departments.

Moreover, hospital emergency departments are required under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) to provide a medical screening, stabilize and treat all patients. Therefore, reductions in federal Medicaid support will result in an increase in uncompensated care and financial strain on hospitals. This will inevitably lead to emergency department closures, especially in areas serving rural and underserved areas that disproportionately serve Medicaid patients.

Emergency departments and emergency nurses stand on the front line of health care for millions of Americans. They are a safety net in many communities. However, cuts to the Medicaid program would both undermine the financial viability of many emergency departments while harming patient care. ENA urges Congress to reject drastic reductions to this essential program as you move forward on the fiscal year 2025 budget reconciliation process.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Kramer, ENA's Director of Government Relations, at 202-465-4745.

Sincerely,



Ryan Oglesby, PhD, MHA, RN, CEN, CFRN, NEA-BC
2025 ENA President