

America's Health Care Providers

March 15, 2005

The Honorable Gordon Smith
United States Senate
404 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Smith and Bingaman:

America's health care providers strongly endorse the Smith-Bingaman amendment to the fiscal year 2006 Budget Resolution that would eliminate Medicaid funding cuts and create a Bipartisan Commission on Medicaid.

We know first-hand the important role that Medicaid plays, serving over 52 million people – half of whom are children and one-quarter of whom are elderly and disabled. Are there ways to improve Medicaid? Absolutely. But we must remember that reform may have enormous consequences for the vulnerable people who rely on Medicaid and those providing needed health care services.

We believe the Bipartisan Commission you propose is a responsible approach to examining the program. Any reforms should be policy-based, not budget-based, and should improve and secure our nation's health care safety net.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Physicians
American Dental Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Health Care Association
American Hospital Association
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Medicaid Health Plans of America
National Association of Children's Hospitals
National Association of Community Health Centers
National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems
Premier
Renal Physicians Association
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Hospital Medicine
VHA Inc.