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March 18, 2008

The Honorable John Dingell
Chairman, Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
2328 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dingell:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association's (AHA) nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, and our 37,000 individual members, I am writing to express our strong support for The Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act of 2008 (H.R. 5613).

The Congress, state Medicaid programs, hospitals and other providers, as well as the vulnerable individuals served by the program, have been inundated with new policy regulations issued by the administration over the last year. Many of these regulations will have significant negative consequences for the people served by Medicaid, as they limit beneficiary access to services to hospital- and school-based clinics, case management and immunizations.

Your legislation will allow Congress more time to assess these significant changes to the way states finance their Medicaid programs by placing a moratorium, through March 2009, on seven administration-imposed Medicaid regulations that would make significant cuts to program services. According to the Congressional Budget Office, nearly \$20 billion in funding over a five-year period is at stake. We encourage Congress to halt the administration's implementation of these regulations in order to protect Medicaid beneficiaries and state governments.

The solution to Medicaid's problems is not harsh spending cuts. Rather, the program deserves a thoughtful, deliberative reform process that ensures that the nation meets its obligation to care for the neediest of our society.

We look forward to working with you to advance H.R. 5613.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

