

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 10, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

We have heard troubling reports that there have been significant efforts to undermine the maintenance of effort (MOE) provisions included in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and have them modified or repealed in the next relief package. We appreciate your inclusion of these critical provisions in the prior legislation and write to strongly urge you that no modifications be made in future legislation.

Republican state officials in Texas have long been eager to weaken the modest Texas Medicaid program. Modifying or repealing the MOE requirements would be invitation for the state to provide even less assistance to our most vulnerable neighbors. It would be extremely harmful to our constituents, and to millions of poor children, seniors, and others who need Medicaid across the country.

States are required to balance their budgets even in a recession; many may turn to the Medicaid and CHIP rolls to save money, kicking people out of the program and severely restricting eligibility, while also limiting the benefits offered. During past recessions, Governors have exerted pressure to eliminate MOE requirements, acknowledging that they wanted to cut eligibility. Any modification to the strong MOE provisions in the Families First bill put the entire Medicaid protection at risk.

With 5 million Texans uninsured prior to this crisis and millions filing for unemployment each week across the country, it is vital that we protect the Medicaid program from destructive cuts. We can ill afford to have even more people without coverage at a time when it is essential.

The health of our most vulnerable constituents and the broader public health are at stake. We urge you respectfully, but in the strongest possible terms, to protect the MOE requirements so they can protect patients.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Doggett

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Al Green

Joaquin Castro

Lizzie Fletcher

Colin Allred

Filemon Vela

Vicente Gonzalez

Sheila Jackson Lee

Sylvia R. Garcia

Marc Veasey

Veronica Escobar

Henry Cuellar