

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE

ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



March 13, 2014

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are writing to express our concerns with the proposed definition of "safety net" in the terms and conditions of the Medicaid Waiver, which could potentially exclude health care providers in our upstate communities.

As negotiations continue with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in an effort to finalize the terms and conditions of the Medicaid Waiver, we request that upstate hospitals and healthcare providers be protected by defining "safety net" as health care providers that care for a large percentage of Medicare as well as Medicaid patients in their respective communities.

As you know, the federal government has agreed to invest \$8 billion over five years in New York's health care system. It is critical that upstate healthcare providers have access to this funding, and we fear that such access may be denied. Agreement has been made in principle about the intent of the funding, which is to reduce avoidable hospitalizations and to expand primary care. This "Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment" (DSRIP) plan is to incentivize efforts to provide more community-based services.

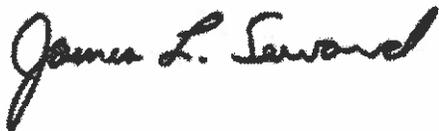
A key component to determining which healthcare providers are able to apply for funding is the definition of "safety net." If a high percentage of Medicaid inpatient volume and uninsured volume become the basis of a "safety net" definition, then health care providers across upstate New York will not qualify and will not be eligible to access the funding. A high Medicare volume must also be considered as part of the basis of a "safety net" definition in order for upstate providers to qualify for funding.

Upstate community hospitals have already begun the transition, which includes outpatient services expansion as well as mergers and affiliations in upstate communities. Funds should not be used to support healthcare providers that have not made a commitment to change and improvement. Waiver funds should allow upstate healthcare providers to continue their transition and commitment to change.

Upstate New Yorkers deserve affordable, quality, cutting-edge healthcare services. Limiting upstate healthcare providers' access to \$8 billion in new funding for healthcare transition is simply not acceptable. Upstate communities have begun their transition and should be incentivized to continue as "safety net" providers. Communities in upstate New York deserve access to transformative funds and this significant investment in New York State's health care delivery system.

We urge you to support a definition of "safety net" that includes health care providers that care for a large percentage of both Medicare and Medicaid patients in their respective communities to encourage the transformation of the health care delivery system across the entire state.

Sincerely,



Sen. James L. Seward
51st Senatorial District



Sen. Joseph Griffo
47th Senatorial District



Sen. Mark Grisanti
60th Senatorial District



Sen. Thomas Libous
52nd Senatorial District



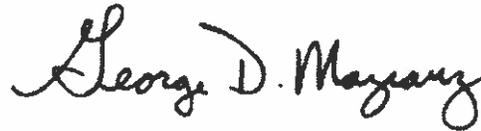
Sen. Catharine Young
57th Senatorial District



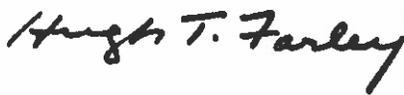
Sen. Elizabeth Little
45th Senatorial District



Sen. John DeFrancisco
50th Senatorial District



Sen. George Maziarz
62nd Senatorial District



Sen. Hugh Farley
49th Senatorial District



Sen. Thomas O'Mara
58th Senatorial District



Sen. Patrick Gallivan
59th Senatorial District



Sen. Patricia Ritchie
48th Senatorial District

Joseph E. Robach

Sen. Joseph Robach
56th Senatorial District

cc: Jason Helgerson
Courtney Burke
Karen Westervett