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*To improve health
through leadership,
service and education*

DHS RESPONSE TO PROPOSED FEDERAL MEDICAID CUTS

The federal government's recent proposal to cut funding to the Medicaid program (Medi-Cal in California) by \$12.2 billion over the next five years would drastically impact health services in Los Angeles County. Low-income children, elderly and disabled residents would be particularly short-changed by those cutbacks, but the quality of care for all citizens would be undermined as well.

Our five hospitals, outpatient clinics and public/private clinic partners serve more than 715,000 individuals per year. Our hospitals provided 551,000 days of hospital care, 276,000 emergency room visits and 1,880,000 outpatient visits last year. County hospitals operate trauma centers used by all Los Angeles County residents. We operate one of four burn treatment centers in Southern California, and train physicians, nurses, and other health professionals through 162 teaching affiliation agreements.

As the major provider of safety net services in Los Angeles County, we depend on Medi-Cal funding to maintain these programs for all patients, not just Medi-Cal patients. In the 2006-07 budget year, we expect to receive \$814 million in State and Federal Medi-Cal funds to support the care we provide. Any reduction in these amounts will reduce access to services in a county where 33% of residents are uninsured.

Governor Schwarzenegger and our California senators and representatives have written to Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt, asking him to not move forward with administrative policies to reduce Medicaid (Medi-Cal) payments that have been rejected previously by Congress. The governor points out in his letter that cuts would impact services for 6.5 million Californians and could impact billions of dollars in services to children, nursing homes, and hospitals.

Write to Secretary Leavitt, President Bush and your congressional representative to oppose these proposals.

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