
NEW MEXICO

Date: 2017-09-23 00:03:27
To: My Senator
From: Veronica Neuman
State: New Mexico
Email: [REDACTED]



We are blessed that our daughter is on the Medicaid waiver in our state. This has helped to provide funding for not only her care-giver services, but medication critical for her quality of care. After a long battle with a psychotic breakdown a few years ago, we desperately looked for an opportunity for her to be in an environment that was conducive to her healing. It turns out we were able to build a small "casita" for her next door to our home. So far it has been a wonderful experience enhancing her quality of life because she has the care and support she needs because of the waiver. Each new day is a blessing, and we are grateful that she is now thriving. Without the waiver, we would not have been able to provide the support she needs into adult life.

Date: 2017-09-21 17:42:24
To: My Senator
From: Lawrence Straus
State: New Mexico
Email: [REDACTED]



Our adult daughter with autism and a variety of other developmental disabilities lives with us.

She is covered by Medicaid because she is on the New Mexico DD Waiver. She has to take very expensive medications for depression, anxiety, obsessions, mood swings, etc., and she sees her psychiatrist every month or two and her art therapist every two weeks. Medicaid is vital to her progress and well-being, as well as some limited respite for us. Do not cut Medicaid for the disabled please!

Date: 2017-09-23 12:55:34

To: My Senator

From: Allison Lemons

State: New Mexico

Email: [REDACTED]



Senate Finance Committee Hearing on the Graham-Cassidy Health Care Bill

September 25, 2017

Submitted by:

Allison Lemons

[REDACTED]
Santa Fe, NM [REDACTED]

On behalf of her brother and ward, Charles Karlake

c/o Easter Seal's El Mirador

[REDACTED]
Santa Fe, NM [REDACTED]

Dear Senators:

You are considering a bill that will destroy Medicaid. The only debatable question is, how long will it take? Before you cast that vote, you should know how much Medicaid, with its federal dollars for the disabled, means to my brother and myself

My only sibling, my 66-year old brother Charles, has cerebral palsy. He lived at home with our parents in Michigan and, after graduating from high school at 21 with a special education diploma, he found a job as a door-check at the Michigan State University library, a job he held for over a decade until being displaced by an electronic eye. Although testing was done by Vocational Rehabilitation, and my mother pressured the University to find him a different position, he never held another job.

Our mother died 17 years ago. By that time, she was 84, and living with my brother in Wichita, KS, where I lived with my husband and teenage sons. Our mother had lived with Charles his entire life, supervised his care, and advocated for him for 48 years. Her death left him an orphan without a home. I took him in, as I always had imagined I would do. Although I knew my brother had threatened suicide several times, I didn't recognize he had mental illness. I didn't know that he suffered not just from Cerebral Palsy, but from severe depression mingled with paranoia and delusions. He resisted moving in with my family; he objected to every suggestion I made; he thought I was spying on him; he refused to see a psychiatrist; he locked himself into the bathroom; he called the police on me; he turned my life into a living hell.

I finally succeeded in getting him to a neuro-psychiatrist at the famed Menninger's Clinic, then in Topeka. She suggested he move into a group home run by the clinic for schizophrenics. Although he did not have that illness, paranoia and depression combined with the mental limitations of the Cerebral Palsy were producing schizophrenic-type symptoms. The home was set-up to help those with mild schizophrenia develop life-skills so that they could eventually live independently. It also provided medications along with continual monitoring by nurses, psychiatrists, social workers, and psychologists, as well as highly trained live-in staff. The stay at Menninger's transformed my brother into a kind man whom everyone likes. Living in a group home, no longer isolated from others, and with the proper medications, he became the sweet person I remembered as a child.

After six or seven months, Charles was discharged into the arms of the State of Kansas. Menninger's concluded that he could only function in a group home setting; the State agreed that he was developmentally disabled and qualified for help. I was

steered to the Sedgwick County Developmental Disability Organization which provided me with a targeted case manager. She lead me through the complexities of the system, helping me choose a group home, and two day programs. I had already found my brother an excellent primary care physicaian, a psychiatrist and a psychologist. However, my brother's happiness, re-found at Menningers, would never been sustained without the County Developmental Disabilities Organization, the case manager, a good group home, and day programs run by charitable organizations. The whole system, including the programs run by the charities, was funded primarily through Medicaid.

Because he had been taken into the State system as an emergency case, Charles was not on Medicaid. Several years later, the State decided to eliminate the funding that paid for my brother's care. They would only pay using Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) funding. I had only a few months to get him on Medicaid, so I hired a lawyer. Charles had retained all the money he had ever earned in those years at the library, and inherited a thousand here and there from distant well-intentioned relatives who didn't realize their gifts would prevent him from getting the services he needed through Medicaid, which, for most people, is the only way to get the services at all. The lawyer helped me to spend down his assets to \$2,000 and to set up a State-approved special-needs trust for him so that he would qualify for Medicaid.

For sixteen years Charles lived happily in a group home in Wichita, attended day programs, and received needed medical attention, most all of which was paid for by Medicaid HCBS funding. Medicaid also paid for any transportation that I did not provide, including rides to and from church, where Charles sang in the choir.

Last May my husband and I moved to New Mexico to be near our son and small grandsons. We moved my brother with us, though, since we, aged 68 and 71, are unable to care for him, I had to find a place for him to live. Over two years ago I started researching services and funding for him in this State. I found an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) that would take him, but, for which my husband and I would have to private pay \$9,000/month until NM Medicaid would take over the financial responsibility for his care. With the advice of a lawyer I hired over a year ago to help steer us (once again!) through the hurdles of Medicaid, I placed him in that ICF. Charles is there now, awaiting a decision from the State as to whether or not he will receive Medicaid. I live in perperual trepidation that either we will not get a decision from the State before our funds run out, or NM Medcaid will find a reason - any reason - to reject him.

With the Graham-Cassidy Bill on the table, I have a third reason for trepidation - namely that soon it won't matter what the State of NM decides because there won't be any Medicaid money for my brother; in fact, there won't even be any ICF for him to live in. All of these scenarios send me into a near-panic: I can't care for my brother myself, and I can't afford to pay for his care. What am I to do? I can't leave him on the street.

I implore you to reject the Graham-Cassidy bill and save millions of Americans like Charles and myself from untold misery and an early death.

Nicole Jorwic

From: Mike Reisz [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, July 14, 2017 4:01 PM
To: Nicole Jorwic
Subject: Medicaid Matters to ME
Attachments: MEDICAID MATTERS TO ME.docx

Please find attached our letter for Congress.

Thank you for your assistance.

Regards,

Mike & Joy Reisz

Albuquerque, NM [REDACTED]

MEDICAID MATTERS TO ME & MY FAMILY

Please be advised the American people know that the current attempt at a health care bill is not a real solution. It will hurt many people, and is not what any conservative with a moral conscience should be in favor of.

Please vote NO on this health care bill as it is not in the best interest of the American people and just causes more problems in the future.

My young adult aunt has both developmental and intellectual disabilities. She depends heavily on Medicaid for the ability to live as normal of a life as possible. Please don't take her life away from her and the many others in similar situations thru no fault of their own.

Again please vote NO on this so called health care bill.

Regards,

Mike & Joy Reisz

Albuquerque, NM [REDACTED]