

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 43

BY REPRESENTATIVE BACALA

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health to reconsider the department's election to exclude roughly two-thirds of the state's Medicaid enrollees from quarterly income eligibility verification.

WHEREAS, Medicaid is the largest expenditure in Louisiana's state budget; and

WHEREAS, from state fiscal year 2009-2010 to state fiscal year 2017-2018, the total state budget grew by nineteen percent while spending on the state Medicaid program grew by one hundred twenty-four percent; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Louisiana's expansion of Medicaid eligibility by executive order in 2016, over five hundred thousand people have been newly enrolled in the state Medicaid program, far exceeding projections by the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) of expansion-related enrollment growth; and

WHEREAS, cost containment in Medicaid is an urgent priority of the legislature; and

WHEREAS, in a report issued in November, 2018, the legislative auditor found that the process LDH uses to determine the eligibility of the Medicaid expansion population is inadequate, and that Louisiana's Medicaid expansion program may have spent as much as eighty-five million dollars on ineligible enrollees; and

WHEREAS, the federal Medicaid agency described the findings presented in this report as "deeply troubling" and the agency's administrator indicated that the federal government could seek repayment of money that the state misspent; and

WHEREAS, using random sampling, the legislative auditor recently found that roughly eight percent of Medicaid enrollees were ineligible for benefits; and

WHEREAS, similarly, in a recent quarterly review of roughly one-third of the Medicaid population for income eligibility verification purposes, LDH found that approximately eight percent of Medicaid enrollees were ineligible for benefits; and

WHEREAS, if the remaining two-thirds of Medicaid enrollees were subject to the same quarterly eligibility review, it is likely that a similar percentage would be found ineligible for benefits; however, due to the department's election to provide extended periods of continuous eligibility for the persons comprising this group (mainly pregnant women and children) through its voluntary enrollment in a maintenance of effort option offered by the federal Medicaid agency, no member of this population of over one million one hundred thousand enrollees is subject to quarterly eligibility verification.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health to reconsider the department's election to exclude roughly two-thirds of the state's Medicaid enrollees from quarterly income eligibility verification.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that on or before September 1, 2019, the Louisiana Department of Health shall submit to the House Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on Health and Welfare, and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare a report detailing the actions it has taken, or will take, to subject to quarterly income eligibility verification all Medicaid enrollees for whom such eligibility verification is allowed by federal policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE