

## An Important Message to the Governor Regarding Patient Protections

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are writing in response to concerns raised within our communities regarding access to prescription drugs through the Medicaid program. As you know, a large number of individuals and families from Black and Hispanic communities rely solely on Medicaid for their health care coverage. We understand the need to trim health care costs, but we disapprove of the difficulties that low-income people are experiencing at the pharmacy counter.

Persons in Medicaid must be provided with protections to ensure uncomplicated and uninterrupted prescription drug access as prescribed by their health care providers. These guarantees had existed for years. We are requesting that certainty and stability for patients be restored to the Medicaid program.

The health disparities in our communities are extreme. Overwhelming numbers of our constituents have multiple and serious health problems. Appropriate, flexible access to prescription drugs allows people to lead healthier and more productive lives. It results in fewer visits to hospitals and emergency rooms, which is cost containment that everyone can support.

Research shows that there are racial, ethnic and gender differences in response to health care treatments. By applying a one-size fits all approach in Medicaid, New York will worsen existing health care disparities. We must do better. Access to high quality health care plays an important part in achieving equality among all communities. We urge you to work with us on a solution to guarantee that Medicaid recipients receive health care, including prescription drugs, as prescribed by their health care providers.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Keith L.T. Wright  
Assemblyman Peter Rivera  
Assemblyman Karim Camara  
Assemblyman Jose Rivera  
Assemblyman Carl Heastie  
Assemblyman Marcos Crespo  
Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries  
Assemblyman Francisco P. Moya  
NAACP NYS Conference  
Hispanic Federation  
Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health  
Association of Black Cardiologists  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses New York Chapter  
Association of Hispanic Mental Health Professionals