

Jim Justice
Governor of West Virginia

June 29, 2017

Senator Joe Manchin
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Manchin,

On behalf of the people of West Virginia, I would like to thank you for your careful consideration of the health care bill before the Senate. With so much at stake, it takes great leadership to put politics aside and do what's right for so many people who stand to lose essential health services in West Virginia.

While the impacts outlined in the Congressional Budget Office report are cause for serious concern, the reality is things are worse than they seem. I want you to be fully aware of the impact the current legislation would have on the state we both love.

Since so many of our people count on Medicaid, any cut to Medicaid would destroy families in West Virginia. We can't put the 175,000 West Virginians who benefit from the Medicaid expansion at risk of losing coverage. The consequences would be beyond catastrophic.

In the face of our drug epidemic, fewer people would have access to drug treatment programs under the current proposal. As the debate moves forward, I hope you and your colleagues will consider the fact that it will only make it harder to combat the drug problem that's ravaging West Virginia.

Even more concerning is that our state Legislature just cut \$54 million from West Virginia's Medicaid budget and backfilled it with voodoo, one-time money— it's a total shell game. That means any federal cut to Medicaid would cripple our people even more. Our state Legislature refused to listen to my repeated warnings about slashing the state's Medicaid budget and their recent actions could be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

I want you to know that the budget passed by our House of Delegates and state Senate hurt many of our people and left a giant Medicaid hole. The hole will get deeper and darker if the federal government reduces Medicaid funding to the states.

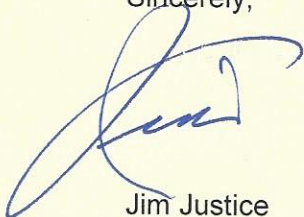
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

West Virginia needs to be a place that looks after the old, the sick, the disabled, and the poor. It's not the West Virginia way to kick someone to the curb when they fall on hard times or get sick. It's not right to pull the rug out from underneath the people of our state.

I ask that you factor in the pitiful reality that the West Virginia Legislature was caught asleep at the switch when it comes to Medicaid funding. It's truly sad and the last thing I want is for our people to get hurt anymore.

Again, I appreciate your steadfast approach in Washington to protect and look after the best interests of our fellow West Virginians that need us the most.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Justice", with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Jim Justice
Governor