



September 13, 2017

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kamala Harris  
United States Senate  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators,

The undersigned associations representing California’s counties and the critical services provided at the county level strongly oppose the proposal introduced by Senators Cassidy, Graham, Heller, and Johnson to dramatically restructure the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA). The measure would reverse the significant progress our state has made in reducing the number of uninsured residents. Capping the federal financial participation in Medicaid and ending the enhanced federal support for states choosing to expand coverage would undermine our efforts and erode the federal, state, and county partnership.

Our members see first-hand how access to health and mental health care improves lives, educational attainment, and employment. In California, Medicaid benefits are delivered through a solid federal, state, and county partnership. Counties care for residents through our public hospitals and health systems, provide rural medical coverage, offer behavioral health services including mental health and substance use disorder treatment, administer public health services, and are responsible for social and health services eligibility functions. In short, California’s 58 counties strive to provide timely and quality Medicaid services under the state Medi-Cal program.

The Graham-Cassidy- Heller- Johnson proposal would eliminate the enhanced Medicaid financing for the expansion population and the subsidies available on Covered California, and convert all of those funds to a state block grant. Funding for the block grant would decrease over time and would be eliminated entirely after 2026. In addition to the block grant for ACA-related funding, the plan would convert additional Medicaid enrollee categories to a per-capita-cap model, which would establish hard federal funding caps for state Medicaid programs.

While each state would be impacted differently, the legislation’s effect on our state would be severe. California would experience the some of the deepest cuts of any other state. The impact is similar to the *Better Care Reconciliation Act* (H.R. 1628) which failed in the Senate in July. The per-capita cap on Medicaid spending will slash the federal contribution to all states by 26 percent in 2026 and 35 percent by 2036, compared to current law. Given our aggressive efforts to enroll families and individuals under the ACA, the bill would cut Medicaid funding to our state by approximately 50 percent in 2026 according to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities.

Page Two

California County Letter Re: Cassidy-Graham-Heller-Johnson Proposal  
September 13, 2017

We urge the Senate to reject the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson measure. Despite claims by the bill's authors, it does not enable California to continue providing health care under the ACA. The financial foundation of the Medi-Cal program, which serves 1 in 3 Californians, will no longer be viable under this bill.

California's counties stand ready to work with the Senate to improve Medicaid and the ACA and strongly support the bipartisan efforts underway to preserve and stabilize the ACA. Our members have learned many important lessons about outreach, retention, access, and continuity of care since the ACA was implemented. We stand ready to assist the Senate in preserving the Act's promise of quality, efficiency, and access to health care for all.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this critical fiscal and policy matter.

Sincerely,



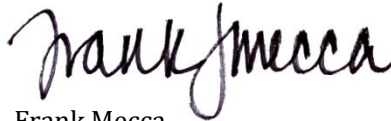
Matt Cate  
Executive Director  
California State Association of Counties  
(CSAC)  
(916) 327-7500



Kirsten Barlow  
Executive Director  
County Behavioral Health Directors  
Association of California (CBHDA)  
(916) 556-3477



Erica Murray  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
California Association of Public Hospitals  
and Health Systems (CAPH)  
(510) 874-7100



Frank Mecca  
Executive Director  
County Welfare Directors Association of  
California (CWDA)  
(916) 443-1749



Michelle Gibbons  
Executive Director  
County Health Executives Association of  
California (CHEAC)  
(916) 327-7540



Jolena Voorhis  
Executive Director  
Urban Counties of California (UCC)  
(916) 327-7531

Page Three

California County Letter Re: Cassidy-Graham-Heller-Johnson Proposal  
September 13, 2017



Kari Brownstein  
Administrative Officer  
County Medical Services Program (CMSP)  
(916) 649-2631



Karen Keeslar  
Executive Director  
California Association of Public Authorities (CAPA)  
(916) 492-9111



Scarlet Hughes, MSW  
Executive Director  
California State Association of  
Public Administrators, Public  
Guardians and Public Conservators  
(CAPAPGPC)  
(916) 449-9909

cc Secretary Diana Dooley, California Health and Human Services Agency  
Director Jennifer Kent, California Department of Health Care Services  
Director Will Lightbourne, California Department of Social Services