

**State Consumer and Family Advisory Committee
For North Carolina**

Advocacy and Customer Service Section
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Kurtis Taylor
Chair

Benjamin Coggins
Vice-Chair

July 14, 2015

Honorable Senators and Representatives
Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Honorable Senators and Representatives:

The North Carolina State Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (State CFAC) is a self-governing and self-directed organization that advises the Secretary, the Director of DMH/DD/SAS and the General Assembly on the planning and management of the State's mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services system (G.S.122c-171).

With that responsibility in mind we felt it important to let you know of our stance around the current budget and Medicaid reform legislation. We will try to be brief and concise:

- 1) It is our belief that Medicaid should stay under the direction of the Department of Health and Human Resources. To separate Medicaid out from all of the other agencies under DHHS seems extremely expensive and counterproductive in trying to develop systems of care that address the needs of the whole person.
- 2) We recommend the integration model that would utilize LME-MCOs for Behavioral Health partnering with Provider Led Entities (PLEs) for physical health would be a crucial component in creating the best model for North Carolina.
- 3) State CFAC supports the House Bill 119 because it allows DHHS to conduct a pilot program first to make sure the plan is viable before moving forward statewide. The House Bill provides DHHS the time to minimize disruption to an essential element of North Carolina's safety net services.
- 4) We would not support cut in funding for LME/MCOs; the opportunity to be creative in solutions is just now becoming a reality, a goal of the initial reform of this system.
- 5) Although not in either budget proposal, we recommend the expansion of Medicaid, based on access to services decreases social cost. The expansion of Medicaid will help those people caught in the middle without coverage of any kind. This group needs appropriate healthcare support as many are one healthcare bill away from poverty.
- 6) We are against the move to repeal the state's Fair Housing Act which would also eliminate the N.C. Human Relations Commission, which is funded partly with federal funds and tasked with investigating and pursuing legal claims of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, or disability when it comes to housing, employment and civil rights violations.

We applaud the Secretary and her staff for their efforts in listening to the people across the state, then proposing changes that we all can get behind and support. Currently, cost savings are put back into the system directly, filling gaps and needs in services to consumers and families at the local level. The privatization of the Medicaid system would undermine this community benefit by shifting the focus from public healthcare to shareholder profit.

Thank you in advance for your serious consideration of these recommendations. We appreciate and value your service to our great state and look forward to remaining a viable and strong voice for consumers and families in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kurtis C. Taylor".

Kurtis Taylor
Chairman of the State Consumer and Family Advisory Committee

cc: Dave Richard, Deputy Secretary for Medical Assistance
Dale Armstrong, Deputy Secretary of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Services
Courtney Cantrell, Division Director, DMH/DD/SAS