



March 19, 2008

The Honorable John Dingell  
Chairman, Committee on Energy & Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2125 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dingell:

On behalf of the 210,000 members and 1,200 affiliates of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), I am writing to express strong support for HR 5613, your legislation to delay and impose moratoria on regulations issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that would devastate critical services under the Medicaid program. NAMI strongly supports this important effort to prevent reductions in critical community-based services for Medicaid beneficiaries living with mental illness. As the nation's largest organization representing individuals with severe mental illness and their families, NAMI is pleased to support this important measure.

As you know, Medicaid is the single largest source of funding for America's public mental health system. Medicaid rehabilitative services and Targeted Case Management (TCM) combine to produce more than 50 percent of all federal funding for community-based services for people living with serious mental illnesses and other disabilities. Rehabilitative services are designed to assist in the recovery of children and adults with serious mental illness. These services are essential to allowing people with mental illness reduce their dependence on inpatient services and emphasize recovery and independence. Unfortunately, regulations put forward by CMS – in several instances without authority from Congress – would severely impair the ability of states to fund these critical services.

It is critical that these devastating regulations be stopped. NAMI looks forward to working with you to ensure passage of HR 5613 and protection of the Medicaid program as a safety net for the most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

Michael Fitzpatrick, M.S.W.  
Executive Director

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