



James L. Madara, MD
Executive Vice President, CEO

American Medical Association
515 N. State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654

ama-assn.org

(p) 312.464.5000
(f) 312.464.4184

March 6, 2013

The Honorable Irene Aguilar, MD
Chair
Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Colorado State Senate
State Capitol Building, Room 338
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Senate Bill 200

Dear Senator Aguilar:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and medical student members, I am writing in support of Senate Bill (S.B.) 200, which would expand Medicaid coverage in Colorado to individuals with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level. The AMA has long supported health insurance coverage for all. As physicians, we know that health care coverage is essential to making sure people get the care they need to lead healthy, productive lives.

S.B. 200 will allow Colorado to take full advantage of the federal funds available to provide health care coverage to thousands of individuals who are currently uninsured in Colorado. More importantly, S.B. 200 will have a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Coloradans by providing access to potentially life-saving care. Indeed studies have confirmed that health care coverage saves lives. Individuals with Medicaid coverage also have better access to care, are more financially secure and have lower levels of depression compared to the uninsured.

Of course, a critical part of providing access to care is ensuring there are enough physicians and other health care professionals to take care of the new patients – and that the Medicaid system appropriately incentivizes them to accept new Medicaid patients. It is clear that physicians are more likely to accept new Medicaid patients in states with higher payments. We urge you, therefore, to keep this in mind as Colorado continues to reform its Medicaid system by supporting enhanced payment rates for physicians to at least Medicare levels and eliminating administrative burdens for physicians who provide care to Medicaid patients.

Thank you again for your efforts on this important issue. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kim Horvath, JD, Senior Legislative Attorney, Advocacy Resource Center at kimberly.horvath@ama-assn.org or (312) 464-4788.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim L. Madara".

James L. Madara, MD

cc: Colorado Medical Society