

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4802

March 25, 2009

The Honorable Joe Manchin, III
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Complex
Building 1
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Governor Manchin,

As you know, on February 17th, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), legislation that will go a long way to help stabilize our economy. An essential component of the recovery package is \$87 billion in federal Medicaid relief for states. I know you share my firm belief that it is absolutely vital for us to keep this important health care safety-net strong for the many West Virginians who need continued access to health insurance.

The Government Accountability Office estimates that West Virginia could receive nearly \$450 million in federal funding over the next two years to help meet existing and growing enrollment needs in Medicaid. West Virginia gained access to \$76,479,599 in federal Medicaid funding from the U.S. Treasury starting on Wednesday, February 25, 2009, – covering the first two quarters of the fiscal year (October 2008-December 2008; and January 2009-March 2009) – and the state will receive additional payments soon. This money is critically important for the working families of our state, and I am confident that it will be used wisely to help families in need.

Recently, I have read press reports recounting some confusion regarding the amount of Medicaid relief that West Virginia is expected to receive during the recession adjustment period defined by the new law as well as about the allowable uses of the additional Medicaid funds. As one of the principal authors of the Medicaid provisions in the new law, I thought it might be helpful to provide more detailed information about the Medicaid relief funding. I have attached a fact sheet on how the Medicaid relief funding works for West Virginia as well as a Congressional Research Service report that explains all the Medicaid provisions included in the new law.

Should your staff like any technical assistance regarding West Virginia's share of the federal Medicaid relief funding, I am happy to arrange conference calls with the appropriate experts at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Government Accountability Office. They will be able to provide more detailed information regarding federal unemployment data and federal estimates of the Medicaid relief dollars that West Virginia could receive in each quarter of the 27-month recession adjustment period.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides the help that our state and our country so desperately need. I look forward to continuing our work together to make sure this new law delivers the help intended to the families of West Virginia. Please feel free to contact me or Jocelyn Moore of my staff (202-224-6472) with any follow-up questions.

Sincerely,



John D. Rockefeller IV

Cc: The Honorable Martha Yeager Walker, Secretary, WV Department of Health and Human Resources
The Honorable Richard Thompson, Speaker of the House of Delegates
The Honorable Don Perdue, Chairman, House Health and Human Resources Committee
The Honorable Nancy Guthrie, Chair, House ARRA Oversight Committee
The Honorable Earl Ray Tomblin, Senate President
The Honorable Roman Prezioso, Chairman, Senate Health and Human Resources Committee