

Att. 1
Submitted written
testimony

April 5, 2019

Chairman Fred Martin
Senate Health & Welfare
Statehouse
Boise, ID 83720

Dear Chairman Martin and Members of the Committee:

The Council on Developmental Disabilities is authorized by federal and state law to monitor service systems and policies and to advocate for improved services that enable Idahoans with developmental disabilities to live meaningful lives, included in their home communities.

The Council opposes the House amended alphabet soup version of Senate Bill 1204a:

At each hearing opportunity I have shared with both Health and Welfare committees the perspective of the disability community as far as family caregivers and direct support workers who should be benefit from Medicaid expansion. The policy lined out in this version of S 1204 will instead cause family caregivers and direct support workers to likely lose out on lifesaving coverage because of failing to meet the bureaucratic deadlines of the mandatory work reporting requirements. I have nothing left to share from the disability community that could compel you to rethink these work reporting requirements.

Today I will speak to you as a private citizen.

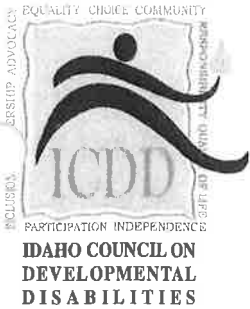
Keeping people healthy, keeps people working.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Christine Pisani, Executive Director



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April 2, 2019

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Close the Gap Idaho Opposes SB1204a, Medicaid Expansion Barriers to Coverage Bill

BOISE, ID – Close the Gap Idaho has come out in opposition to SB1204a after the Senate moved to add harmful barriers to coverage to a bill previously supported by healthcare advocates.

Harmful amendments to 1204 were made in the Senate despite hours of committee testimony in support of the original legislation from healthcare advocates and members of the public. Prior bills with similar barriers to coverage were met with opposition from more than 50 groups on two separate occasions in recent weeks.

The amendments include work-reporting requirements, a required referral to see a family planning specialist, the option for those living between 100-138% of the federal poverty level to stay on the exchange, a required legislative review of Medicaid expansion in the 2023 legislative session, and others.

“The amendments to Senate Bill 1204 direct state funds to additional bureaucracy. A better investment for Idaho families would be the types of training and education that help people climb up the economic ladder,” said Lauren Necochea, director of Idaho Voices for Children.

Instead of removing people from coverage for noncompliance, the work-reporting requirement in SB1204a would institute copays for individuals who do not meet the requirement. Using copays in this way would trigger a 1916(f) waiver, which is difficult and costly to apply for and administer. The proposed provision would result in added costs while making it difficult for some applicants to navigate the bureaucracy, submit the required paperwork, and secure coverage. No such waiver has ever been approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Just last week, a federal district court declared work requirements in Kentucky and Arkansas illegal.

“Medicaid work requirements will create an unexpected disincentive to seek employment for people with mental illness and other disabilities,” said Jim Baugh, JD, Executive Director of DisAbility Rights Idaho. “For most people, work is beneficial and rehabilitative. However, if getting even a part-time job means that you are no longer “unfit for employment” you lose your exemption and now have new, burdensome reporting requirements or copays. It is far safer for an exempt person to avoid work altogether.”

After Proposition 2 passed with more than 61% of the vote, a late-February poll found that [74% of Idahoans feel the Legislature should implement the law as it was passed by the voters](#), while only 17% say the law should be changed.

About Close the Gap Idaho: Close the Gap Idaho is a network of over 300 organizations and individuals statewide, working to support a complete solution to the coverage gap and to preserve health coverage for Idahoans. Close the Gap Idaho has led the effort to expand Medicaid in Idaho since 2014. A list of Close the Gap Idaho steering committee members can be found on the [Close the Gap Idaho website](#). Quotes from additional member organizations and Idahoans in the gap are shared below.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 4, 2019

Contact: Logan Dennis
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**Close the Gap Idaho Decries Flagrant Disregard of Constituent
Concerns,
*Calls on Senate to Reject House-Amended Bill***

BOISE, ID –Today the House added multiple expensive provisions to SB1204aa, including a work requirement that would take coverage away from Idahoans who fail to meet it or can't prove they are working or exempt. These amendments come after consistent public opposition to work reporting requirements, and despite the fact that work reporting requirements were deemed illegal in federal court just last week. See Close the Gap Idaho's [factsheet about the recent legal decision here](#).

In over 10 hours of nearly unanimous testimony, Idahoans have expressed their opposition to costly work reporting requirements. In a flagrant disregard of both the will of the people and the input shared at these hearings by constituents, the House today amended Senate Bill 1204aa, to add even more punitive work-reporting requirements that will remove eligible Idahoans from health insurance.

“Kicking people off health coverage goes against the central tenet of Medicaid. By law, a state cannot make work a condition of accessing health coverage,” said Liz Woodruff, Assistant Director of Idaho Voices for Children. “There is no ‘fix’ to a work-reporting requirement. No amount of exemptions or changes to timelines will make this provision immune to legal action,” Woodruff concluded.

No fiscal note has been provided for the House-amended bill. The cost of the previous version, SB1204a, surpassed \$4 million, according to budget analysis. No analysis has been conducted to assess the actual administrative burden of kicking people off coverage. The bill no longer has a provision for any work training or education.

“This amended House bill ignores the will of the voters and blatantly disregards the concerns of the public without any fair accounting of the fiscal and administrative

impacts of the legislation,” said Caroline Merritt of Close the Gap Idaho. “It is incumbent upon the Senate to reject this irresponsible legislation,” Merritt finished.

After Proposition 2 passed with more than 61% of the vote, a poll conducted in late-February found that [74% of Idahoans feel the Legislature should implement the law as it was passed by the voters](#), while only 17% say the law should be changed.

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