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July 11, 2017

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

As a constituent and a local school superintendent, I strongly oppose The Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017 (BCRA) or any legislative provisions that would radically change the Medicaid funding structure and repeal the Medicaid expansion that has helped schools provide necessary health services to millions of children.

Specifically, the per capita system proposed under the BCRA will undermine states' ability to provide America's neediest children access to vital healthcare that ensures they have adequate educational opportunities and can contribute to society. While children comprise almost half of Medicaid beneficiaries, less than one in five dollars spent by Medicaid is consumed by children. Accordingly, a per capita cap, even one that is based on different groups of beneficiaries, will disproportionately harm children's access to care, including services received at school.

A school's primary responsibility is to provide students with a high-quality education. However, children cannot learn to their fullest potential with unmet health needs. As such, school district personnel regularly provide critical health services to ensure that all children are ready to learn and able to thrive alongside their peers. Increasing access to health care services through Medicaid improves health care and educational outcomes for students. Providing health and wellness services for students in poverty and services that benefit students with disabilities ultimately enables more children to attain higher-education opportunities and become gainfully employed.

I urge you to oppose any effort to significantly change the funding structure of Medicaid, thereby harming our students and their college- and career-readiness.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey M. Hicks, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools