



April 9, 2019

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### **Close the Gap Idaho Vows to Oppose Implementation of 1204a**

BOISE, ID – Close the Gap Idaho is extremely disappointed in Governor Brad Little’s decision to sign 1204a and is vowing to fight implementation of the damaging bill. The legislation to implement work-reporting requirements, among other provisions, will cost Idaho taxpayers millions to administer while stripping Medicaid-eligible Idahoans of their healthcare coverage. The bill will also trap Idaho in costly lawsuits over the work-reporting requirement, which has been deemed illegal in other states.

Last week, a federal judge ruled Medicaid work reporting requirements in Kentucky and Arkansas unlawful because work-reporting requirements violate the central tenet of the Medicaid program and, therefore, coverage cannot be conditioned on work. See Close the Gap Idaho’s [factsheet about the recent legal decision here](#).

“1204a will do nothing but cost Idaho taxpayers millions of wasted dollars on growing government, creating a complicated bureaucracy, and making it harder for low-income Idahoans to access healthcare,” said Caroline Merritt with Close the Gap Idaho. Merritt continued, “Despite the fact that no other state has successfully implemented a work program without reversing the decision or having their program overturned in federal court, Idaho has learned nothing from their experiences and is marching toward an expensive legal battle of our own.”

Governor Little expressed his own concerns in the legislation’s transmittal letter, saying “I have concerns regarding the work and training reporting requirements in this bill. Similar requirements have resulted in costly lawsuits and were recently struck down in federal courts. ... Unfortunately, this bill fails to utilize our existing work and training program...”

In addition to requiring at least three federal waivers to be prepared and submitted, including an 1115 waiver and a 1332 waiver, this legislation will now require Idaho’s Department of Health & Welfare to submit a 1916F waiver, which is a more complicated and costly waiver than the standard 1115 waiver.

The Governor also expressed concern with the administrative burden and fiscal note, saying “the reporting activities required in this bill risk eligibility sanctions associated with reporting errors and result in an unnecessary administrative burden. ... I am troubled the fiscal impact does not accurately represent the increased administrative costs associated with the work reporting activities. In the future, I strongly urge the Legislature to evaluate the work requirement set forth in this bill and ensure it is the most effective and efficient way to connect Idahoans to employment opportunities while providing access to healthcare.”

“Instead of ensuring that Idahoans can access healthcare coverage to stay healthy or treat chronic conditions so they can continue working, these Idahoans will now spend their time filling out endless paperwork, scheduling doctors appointments just to prove they are ‘sick enough’ for a temporary exception,” said Liz Woodruff of Close the Gap Idaho. “Close the Gap Idaho will do everything we can to assist Idahoans in the gap who have now been left in limbo because of this legislation,”

The Governor’s actions come after significant public opposition to work-reporting requirements in the form of polling, hours of public testimony, and thousands of letters and phone calls in opposition to Medicaid barriers of coverage.

**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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