



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN EDUCATION NETWORK

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December 19, 2011

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: WI. Dept. of Health Services Waiver of Federal Maintenance of Effort (MEO) Requirements

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network urges you to deny the request from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) for a waiver of federal maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements. The effects of the changes proposed by DHS are clearly at odds with congressional intent to significantly reduce the number of uninsured Americans by building on the Medicaid and CHIP coverage that states already have in place.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that works to educate and motivate citizens to participate in their government. Our members are women and men who work to improve our systems of government and impact public policies through education and advocacy. The League at all levels - national, regional, state and local - conducts in-depth policy studies to clarify the impacts of legislation and advocate for the positions of its membership. The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network operates on the state level with leadership and grassroots support from the League of Women Voters of the United States and the 16 local Leagues in our state. We so appreciated your address to the LWW national convention in 2010.

The League believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all residents. Approval of the DHS waiver request would be very damaging for Wisconsin and a dangerous national precedent. A waiver would reduce BadgerCare coverage by more than 64,000 people and would conflict with the MOE requirements of federal law. A waiver would increase bureaucratic red tape and the number of uninsured children in Wisconsin, reversing decades of progress made on both fronts under Republican and Democratic governors.

A waiver would also increase low-income families' out-of-pocket health care costs, pricing needed care out of reach for some. The waiver could be particularly harmful for children with special health care needs and other people with disabling conditions who rely on BadgerCare. In addition, a waiver would imply your agency's approval of a process that denied meaningful public input because essential details of the proposal were not made available in advance of any public hearing opportunities.

As an organization devoted to citizen engagement and responsive government, the League is further concerned that detail on the DHS proposal was not made available to the public to allow meaningful input.

In summary, approval of DHS' waiver proposal would offer no substantive benefits and impose a high cost on our state and America's effort to make health care better and more affordable. We strongly urge you to reject it.

Thank you for your consideration and your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Andrea Kaminski  
Executive Director

cc: President Barack Obama  
Cindy Mann, Director of the Center for Medicaid and State Operations