



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Tim Pawlenty

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

February 18, 2010

The Honorable Erin Murphy
413 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Murphy:

As the House debates your bill to reinstate General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC), I want to express my concern that your legislation does not fit within a balanced budget plan.

Your bill reestablishes the GAMC program with almost no reform. Simply reinstating the same program I vetoed last year, along with a 50 percent reduction in reimbursements, does not properly reform the program. Likewise, with doctors under pressure on many fronts, the size of the proposed reimbursement reduction is alarming.

Just as importantly, the money you spend to recreate GAMC is otherwise used in my supplemental budget proposal to help solve the state's \$1.2 billion budget deficit. Those same dollars cannot be used twice.

A bill to reinstate GAMC cannot be considered in a vacuum, without first considering an overall budget solution. Passage of the GAMC bill in the absence of any plan by the legislature to solve the current budget deficit is premature. Legislation that significantly impacts the state's budget should not be enacted in a piecemeal fashion. A measure like this would need to be part of a comprehensive, balanced budget solution.

Further, my administration is implementing plans to serve most GAMC enrollees. The Department of Human Services is moving forward with the auto-enrollment process into MinnesotaCare, which is now scheduled to occur at the end of March. While the benefit set for MinnesotaCare is more modest, this solution will maintain health care coverage for most GAMC enrollees.

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I appreciate the work you have done on this issue and remain open to financially workable ideas. My Administration stands ready to offer additional technical assistance to you. However, we must keep in mind that our primary and overarching interest is to solve the deficit and balance the state's budget.

Thank you for your work on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Pawlenty', written over a faint dotted line.

Tim Pawlenty
Governor

cc: All Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives