



# Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

**Write Here! Write Now!**

**ISSUE: Stop the Assault on Medicaid**

[www.uusj.org](http://www.uusj.org) click on Advocacy for Issue Action Information

[advocacy@uusj.org](mailto:advocacy@uusj.org) 703-786-5206 or 202-600-9132

**Time period: Send PDF/emails to [advocacy@uusj.org](mailto:advocacy@uusj.org) by Monday, Feb. 12, 2018 12:00pm ET**

## **Instructions for writing and sending letters to UUSJ for delivery to U.S. Senate offices:**

- **Focus on the topic - Stop the assault on Medicaid** by resisting work requirements and other counterproductive administrative requirements and barriers for Medicaid beneficiaries
  - **Be original and speak from the heart.** If possible describe a personal experience or story, or include 1-2 talking points (on page 2), **in your own words**, to support the main message.
  - **Include a clear and specific action request.** "I urge you to..."
  - Include your name and **complete mailing address** - proves that you are a constituent.
  - **Send us your letters:** If you are sending your own, or if you are offering a WHWN at your congregation, **PDF or scan, and email** by 12 noon on Monday, February 12 to [advocacy@uusj.org](mailto:advocacy@uusj.org). **In the subject line write: Medicaid Letters from (insert your state/congregation).**
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## **Sample Letter**

Today's date

Dear Senator [insert name],

I am a Unitarian Universalist from [optional: name of congregation and location]. Guided by my faith, I support a national healthcare system that provides accessible, affordable, quality healthcare for all.

[rewrite this in your own words] Treating Medicaid like a welfare program contradicts its core purpose and undermines the social safety net that so many people depend on. Evidence shows that Medicaid expansion has made it possible for more Americans to receive healthcare services, and has improved their health and financial stability, their ability to seek employment and continue working, and even to volunteer in their communities.

[Insert personal experience, story, or pick 1-2 additional talking points (page 2) that are important to you, state it in your own words, to support the main message.]

I urge you to reject work requirements and other barriers to Medicaid eligibility. Stay true to the intent of the Medicaid program to provide support for families and individuals in their time of greatest need.

[PERSONALIZED - WRAP UP SENTENCE]

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME and **COMPLETE ADDRESS**

**(See other side for Background, Talking Points and Key Messages)**

## Background & UU Grounding

**Background:** Under the Trump Administration, new rules for Medicaid programs managed by the States are being implemented. States can request waivers of current rules to undertake demonstration projects for new requirements that purport to improve the system, reduce costs, and place a focus on personal responsibility of Medicaid beneficiaries. The Department of Health and Human Services is approving waivers that allow states to put up barriers to Medicaid coverage, including work and other restrictive requirements. Two states (KY and IN) already have received approval, while many others have submitted requests. **Some in Congress are calling for mandatory work requirements for all Medicaid recipients except those exempt due to illness, disability, or in select programs.** Yet the great majority of Medicaid beneficiaries already work or are exempt due to illness or disability. Research does not indicate that working causes good health, but evidence shows that Medicaid helps improve health and makes it easier to find and keep a job, or volunteer in their communities.

**UU Grounding:** Our faith calls us to “respond to economic injustice and advocate for those among us being harmed by inequity... we cannot ignore the harm caused by a system that gives control of wealth and resources to a very small percentage of people while many others, including those who carry out the work of the world, struggle to survive. Our sources, principles, and theologies of our faith compel us to act” (2017 UU Statement of Conscience on [Escalating Economic Inequity](#)).

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### Key Message, Facts and Talking Points

**Key Messages:** We believe it is wrong and counterproductive to erect barriers to Medicaid coverage by adding work and administrative requirements which will reduce the Medicaid rolls and put the most vulnerable people at greater risk to illness, disability, death, and financial ruin.

#### Facts and Talking Points:

- **Medicaid provides healthcare coverage; it’s not welfare.** Proposed changes to Medicaid to require work and add administrative requirements are in direct conflict with the core purpose of Medicaid -- to provide medical assistance to low income people.
- **The great majority of Medicaid recipients already work.** Almost all of those who don’t are ill or disabled, going to school, taking care of home or family, or retired.
- **Work requirements for Medicaid recipients will result in loss of benefits for the most vulnerable.**
- **“Lock-out” provisions hurt people who do not meet new work requirements.** They will not be eligible to resume coverage for six months after they complete a **“re-determination process”** leaving them vulnerable to health and financial risk.
- **We should increase funding and access to treatment - not cut funding.** Slashing Medicaid undermines efforts to address the opioid crisis and provide treatment. Over 42,000 Americans died last year from opioids. Medicaid covers nearly 4 of 10 nonelderly adults with opioid addiction.

(See other side for writing instructions and sample letter)