



Missouri Alliance for HOME CARE

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SB 28 Talking Points and Elevator Speech

The Ask

We are asking that legislators vote NO on SB 28, or at the very least support an amendment that would bring the waiver application back to the full General Assembly instead of the Joint Committee on Public Assistance before the application is submitted to CMS.

Talking Points

The Missouri Senate Seniors, Families and Children Committee voted out SB 28 on Wednesday, February 1, which would dramatically alter Missouri's Medicaid program. **These financing changes would jeopardize health services for seniors, people with disabilities (including those with serious mental illness), and children and leave Missouri taxpayers on the hook for extra costs.** Senate Bill 28 seeks to take federal funds for Medicaid services as a block grant (or a set, capped amount of funds). As a result, the state of Missouri would be on the hook for any unanticipated spending needs, resulting in either increased costs to the state, or cuts to eligibility or health services for kids, seniors, people with disabilities, pregnant women, or very low-income parents.

The current legislation would have a joint committee on public assistance take public testimony regarding the changes, but it would have unelected bureaucrats make the final decision about changes to Missouri's health care services *and* the General Assembly would not have final say regarding the changes.

- Block grants generally don't keep up with increased health care costs, so Medicaid is slowly cut over time.
- Under a block grant or capitated amount, the federal government would give the state a predetermined set of funds, but that amount won't be linked to the actual cost of health care in the future.
- While SB 28 includes some provisions to potentially adjust the block grant amount in cases of extended economic downturns and natural disasters, it doesn't (and can't) adjust for every contingency.
- If Missouri's costs exceed the amount in the block grant, it will have to use its own funds to make up the difference – or cut health services or eligibility for thousands of Missourians.

While Medicaid's current financing structure is nimble and can respond to the economy or changing demographics, Senate Bill 28 leaves thousands of Missourians vulnerable to dramatic healthcare cuts and puts Missouri at financial risk.

Sample Elevator Speech

Hello Senator_____, my name is _____ and I would like to discuss some of my concerns with SB 28. 1.) This bill would direct the state to apply for a global waiver with the intent of turning Medicaid into a block grant program. Missouri now receives a federal match for the cost of the program. If there are unexpected expenses because of something like a natural disaster or a flu pandemic Missouri gets extra help to cover those costs. Under a block grant, Missouri gets an annual capped payment and once the money is gone, it's gone no matter the actual costs. This means the state is on the hook for the rest and would likely have to cut services or eligibility for the program. Missouri has some of the strictest eligibility for Medicaid in the nation and only allows the most vulnerable citizens like children and people with disabilities to access the program. A block grant would jeopardize their health care. 2.) SB 28 directs the waiver application to go before the Joint Committee on Public Assistance instead of the General Assembly. Such an important decision for a \$9 billion program should not be left to 10 people. Can we count on you to vote NO on SB 28 or at least support an amendment that would bring the waiver application to the General Assembly?

(information received from Missouri Health Partnership)