



Grover G. Norquist

President

November 29, 2004

Dear Kansas legislator:

**I am writing to urge you to resist the easy and outdated solution of tax increases to address your state's healthcare funding difficulties.** Gov. Sebelius recently proposed a \$50 million tax increase to pay for expanded government run healthcare coverage. Such a proposal will only expand a broken and inefficient one-size-fits-all system, and will do so by placing ever-greater tax burdens on hard-working Kansas families.

In 1964, one might have been excused for considering the idea; today, we should all know better.

Nationwide, Medicaid spending and similar state run health plans are pushing states toward bankruptcy. State services from education to law enforcement to highways are being neglected as states try to pay for their inefficient health programs. Even Tennessee's TennCare – once considered a model by pro-government health advocates – is on the verge of being disbanded because it is simply not affordable.

**There is reason for enthusiasm, however: several states are attempting to reform their Medicaid systems, rather than simply expanding and propping up their dying old programs.** The common goal of these programs is ending the one-size-fits-all government run monopoly and replacing it with a consumer focused, individual approach. It seeks to empower beneficiaries to choose their own health coverage, and to shop around for the best care at the lowest price.

In this respect, South Carolina is perhaps the model for the nation. It has applied for waivers from the federal government to radically overhaul its Medicaid program. If approved, South Carolina would cover all current Medicaid recipients in a basic catastrophic and preventive plan, guaranteeing that major bills like hospital stays and preventive care such as cholesterol screening are received by everyone.

Then, each recipient would be given a private account, accessible by debit card, allowing them to purchase day to day medical care on their own. They could choose to purchase a full coverage managed care plan, or pay doctors and pharmacies directly. And because any surplus funds left over at the end of the year would remain in their accounts, they would have every incentive to find the lowest cost services.

Real reform, as being attempted by South Carolina, would empower patients and hold down costs, rather than throw good money after bad in a fast disintegrating government bureaucracy. **Kansas cannot afford its current Medicaid system, nor the new taxes required to keep it afloat. And Kansas voters will not accept new taxes, as this year's elections demonstrate.**

I urge you to reject Gov. Sebelius' backwards-looking proposal, and I offer you all the resources of my organization to help you design an innovative, consumer focused reform plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Norquist', written in a cursive style.

Grover G. Norquist