October 27, 2017

The Honorable Charles D. Baker
Governor
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the MassHealth Section 1115 Demonstration Amendment Request your administration filed in September of this year. We encourage you to carefully consider the comments the advocates and stakeholders have submitted and to prioritize the needs of patients as you work to finalize the waiver amendment.

Massachusetts has a proud history of leading the nation in innovative approaches to improving health care delivery. From achieving near universal coverage to supporting our top-tier research institutions and hospitals, Massachusetts, time and again, has set the gold standard for a robust health care system. Amending the current waiver presents the Commonwealth with yet another opportunity to bolster MassHealth so that it continues to provide high-quality coverage without sacrificing the access, treatments, and services that it currently provides to beneficiaries.

While we understand the fiscal challenges the Commonwealth faces in developing a long-term, sustainable state budget, our state has always been a national leader in taking care of all residents and ensuring health costs are not cause for economic hardship for anyone. Without additional details on the amendment to the waiver, we are concerned that some of the current proposals stray from that tenet which has long been a fabric of the Commonwealth’s spirit. Moreover, we are concerned that short-term savings could sacrifice access and outcomes, ultimately leading to increased state and federal spending.

After review of the Commonwealth’s proposed waiver amendment and public comments, we encourage particular attention to the following issues:

- How proposed changes to Medicaid eligibility could reduce or restrict needed access to providers and services;
- How a closed drug formulary could affect patients with limited financial means and how individuals could successfully navigate a complex appeal process to access medically necessary prescription drugs; and
- How the proposed elimination of non-emergency transportation benefits would affect Medicaid patients’ access to needed care, and how such a proposal would affect access taken together with the proposal to restrict provider networks.
As a delegation, we worked closely with your administration in a transparent manner to develop last year’s successful Medicaid 1115 waiver. We look forward to working with you in such a manner to continue building on that success and to discourage any moves to dismantle or water down the existing waiver.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or our staff.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III
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Stephen F. Lynch
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Katherine M. Clark
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