

RICHARD BURR
NORTH CAROLINA

United States Senate

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March 15, 2016

Mr. Andy Slavitt
Acting Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Slavitt:

We are writing on behalf of North Carolina's seniors to express our serious concern with the proposed cuts to Medicare Advantage (MA) Retiree Coverage included in the February 19th Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 2017 Advance Rate Notice. Medicare Advantage plans have been very popular with seniors. Unfortunately, the proposed cut for MA Employer Group Waiver Plans threatens the choice and access to these MA plans for 3.3 million retirees, 135,000 of whom reside in North Carolina.

Employers look to MA Retiree Coverage as a critical form of health care coverage for their retirees because it offers more coordinated care, and a greater choice of benefits than Fee-For-Service Medicare. This proposed cut to MA Retiree Coverage could negatively affect employers offering MA Retiree Coverage to their workforce and the seniors who have chosen these MA plans. Furthermore, this 2.5 percent cut could harm one in four Medicare Advantage beneficiaries in North Carolina, and one outside estimate suggests that the impact of this cut to MA Retiree Coverage could reduce the value of this benefit by up to \$22 a month. We are concerned that this cut will result in reduced benefits, less access to care, and higher costs for seniors enrolled in these plans in North Carolina and throughout the country.

We strongly urge CMS to reconsider the proposed cut to MA Retiree Coverage Plans in the 2017 Final Rate Notice to help ensure that MA employers will continue to offer this plan option, and seniors will continue to have a choice of MA plans to access high quality care.

Thank you in advance for considering our request. We look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that North Carolina's seniors have access to the choices and benefits of the Medicare Advantage program.

Sincerely,



Richard Burr
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator