



Below are excerpts from letters nurses hand delivered to members of Congress today:

“In Pennsylvania, the healthcare industry is one of the largest employers in the northeastern part of the state. There are still nurses and healthcare workers in the Wilkes Barre area who were laid off from their jobs in 2009 due to state budget cuts who still have not found any employment -- full time or part-time....Cutting federal spending on Medicare or Medicaid will mean further job cuts and more nurses facing the same uncertainty.

“Illness or death don’t just affect a single life, because each of those lives affects more than 100 other lives—those they love and those who love them. And when that death is senseless and could have been prevented -- if you worked for the people you represent instead of just looking at a balance sheet -- it can only be called a disgrace.”

Deborah Bonn, RN, BSN
Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania

“Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island has one of the busiest obstetrical units in the nation and serves many high-risk and poor patients. The women I care for are at especially high risk of delivering pre-term babies with very low birth weight.... Additional cuts in Medicaid or Medicare would tragically impact the outcome of many women’s pregnancies. We as a country are listed as 29th in the world in infant mortality rates. This is not something we should be proud of and is not something that will improve if we make further cuts in Medicaid. It is time to look for other ways to balance the budget.”

- Beth Burgess, RN
North Providence, Rhode Island
27 years as a nurse

“Now is not the time to cut funding to Medicare or Medicaid. As a nurse at the American Red Cross, I talk to people every day that have lost jobs, homes and health insurance. Many of these people are hoping to stay healthy without care and that’s a big risk. Families with children especially need the assistance of Medicaid until our economy improves and more Americans are working again.”

- Connie Lynn, RN
Michigan

Nurse Alliance of SEIU. www.seiu.org

American Red Cross-Blood Collection

“After 36 years of pediatric nursing, I am truly alarmed at the direction of health care in our country. I am in my 16th year of working at a hospital that provides care to the poorest patients of all ages in one of the wealthiest counties in the United States: Palm Beach County, Florida. We have already had cuts in Medicaid funding at the state level so any further cuts would gravely impact the care that can be delivered safely in addition to reduced work hours and layoffs.... Even with the acuity level of patients increasing, the staffing levels of professional RNs are shrinking due to cost saving measures that many “For Profit” hospitals are implementing.”

- Linda Bennett RN, BSN, CCNR
Wellington, Florida
36 years as a nurse

“My unit is working with the minimum number of nurses on the floor already, not allowing for any emergencies. If it gets busy to the point where the quality of our care delivery is in question, we are forced to call our co-workers and beg them to please come in to work and help us on their time off. It is a terrible position to be in and cuts to Medicaid and Medicare will only make it worse. I did not enter nursing to be put in this position. It should never be this way.”

- Kris N. Jones
OB-RNC, BSN, BS
West Palm Beach, Florida

“As a nurse in healthcare for almost 40 years, I have witnessed sweeping changes in medicine and nursing. But the tide is turning and Medicaid and Medicare cuts are driving our reality. We are going backwards. There are many faces, but few voices. With additional cuts ... nurses will continue tirelessly to speak for those who don't have a voice and provide healthcare even for tiniest of patient. My most recent baby I took care of weigh 400 gms=1lb, 1oz. But cuts will limit our practice. Please help nurses and patients by providing us with the resources we need!”

- Donna Marie Anderson, RNC
Camarillo, California
40 years as a nurse

“I have worked as a neurosurgery intensive care unit RN for five years; I see the worst of the works from car accidents, gunshot wounds, cancer and beatings. With additional cuts to Medicaid and Medicare, nurses will be required to work overtime to keep up with patient demands. We will have to work harder with fewer supplies. If my job were cut, my patients would die in the streets due to lack of open beds, experienced nurses and equipment to safely care for them. Congress should dedicate more funds to Medicare and Medicaid because no one knows when they will find themselves in a debilitating state and need assistance.”

- Alexandrea Graham, RN
Los Angeles, California
LAC & USC Medical Center