



**State Representatives
Thomas E. West & Allison Russo**

Director Maureen M. Corcoran
Ohio Department of Medicaid
50 West Town Street, Suite 400
Columbus, Ohio 43215

January 16, 2020

Dear Director Corcoran,

Thank you for outlining the problems within the Medicaid Department under the previous administration. We appreciate your transparency and commend your department's diligent work to address the issues.

We found the problems outlined in the report alarming, especially the defects riddling the information technology system known as "Ohio Benefits." Given the nearly 1,100 system defects currently identified, the growth rate of 18 – 20 defects/week that the system generated during calendar year 2018, and the almost 1,800 "workarounds" created thus far, it is clear that the system does not work as intended. That these system defects contributed to an error rate of almost 44 percent for eligibility determination is extremely troubling. When paired with the overall decrease in Medicaid enrollment and the increasing numbers of uninsured children in Ohio—which we know has significant consequences on the short- and long-term wellbeing and health of our children—we are left with a very disturbing picture.

In light of the numerous problems identified, we would like a detailed plan on how the Department of Medicaid intends to address these issues, as well as a timeline for completion. We would appreciate answers to the following questions:

1. What is the timeline for Ohio Benefits, the information system owned by Accenture and adapted fit the needs of Medicaid and JFS, to work properly (i.e., eliminate the system defects identified and the need for "workarounds")?
2. Does the system continue to demonstrate a defect growth rate of 18 – 20 defects/week or have the number of defects stabilized? What is the current defect growth rate?
3. How will the Ohio Benefits system defects be fixed and who has primary responsibility for ensuring those fixes occur?
4. What is the timeline to fully reduce the caseload backlog?
5. What is the plan to hold vendors accountable for the Ohio Benefits system defects and reimburse taxpayers for incomplete contracted services?
6. What is the correlation between the defects within Ohio Benefits, the decrease in Medicaid enrollment, and the increase in uninsured children in Ohio?
7. What are the drivers of Ohio's increasing morbidity rates among Medicaid beneficiaries compared to other states—both with Group VIII and Covered Families and Children?

The extensive and troubling defects found within Ohio Benefits, as well as the problems stemming from these defects, could (and may already) jeopardize healthcare access for thousands of Ohioans. As a result, we are asking the Department of Medicaid to consider pausing the implementation of Medicaid work requirements until problems with the Ohio Benefit system have been fully resolved.

As you know, Medicaid provides essential health services to the most vulnerable Ohioans. The benefits of Medicaid Expansion are well-documented, and a well-functioning Medicaid system is key in our current efforts to treat addiction and mental health issues, improve the health of children, and reduce the burden of chronic diseases. We should not add another administratively complex element, such as work requirements, until we are confident the system determining Medicaid eligibility works properly. We do not want individuals who qualify for Medicaid to lose access due to avoidable technical errors. For this reason, we ask that you consider our request to pause work requirement implementation.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter. We look forward to supporting the department's efforts to resolve these issues in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



Thomas West
State Representative
Ohio House District 49



C. Allison Russo
State Representative
Ohio House District 24