



**BY ELECTRONIC MAIL**

July 14, 2021

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Chairman  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
US House of Representatives  
2107 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
US House of Representatives  
1035 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo  
Chairwoman  
Health Subcommittee  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
US House of Representatives  
272 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Darren Soto  
Energy & Commerce Committee Member  
US House of Representatives  
2353 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
US House of Representatives  
2354 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jennifer González  
Resident Commissioner  
US House of Representatives  
2338 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear members of Congress:

Receive a warm greeting from the physicians-members of the Association of Hematology and Medical Oncology of Puerto Rico also known as “Asociación de Hematología y Oncología Médica de Puerto Rico” (AHOMPR). The AHOMPR has developed multidisciplinary efforts to improve and ensure excellence in the care of cancer and patients who suffer from blood disorders in Puerto Rico. AHOMPR also promotes research and educational programs for physicians and other health professionals in the fields of Hematology and Oncology, with a special focus on cancer prevention and screening methods. The AHOMPR is affiliated to the American Society of Oncology (ASCO) and other health organizations in the US in which we offer our experience and expertise to work with you and other colleagues to improve access and quality healthcare for Puerto Ricans and fellow Americans.

In recent days, it was announced by the Energy & Commerce Committee that a preliminary bipartisan agreement has been reached in the House of Representatives for a five-year term of Medicaid funding for Puerto Rico and the US territories. On July 13, 2021, HR 4406 was introduced, to include such agreement. This is an important step to avoid the Medicaid fiscal cliff and for the continuation of medical services and health coverage for people on poverty level in Puerto Rico.

There are several factors that affect the quality and access to medical services including the COVID-19 pandemic and limited public funding to protect patients with cancer, survivors, and cancer care providers. It is important to notice that patients with cancer in Puerto Rico do not have access to long-term care services through Medicaid coverage as well as other extended services that are covered in other states since Puerto Rico does not have equal funding treatment like the rest of the nation. Long-term care services must be covered in Puerto Rico as the need is rising for several health conditions including cancer. Cancer statistics are increasingly high aggressively affecting people's life without distinction of social status. These services give better chances to patients for overcoming and dealing with the effects of health conditions that could eventually cause disability and chronic illness by accessing services that improve quality of life. Providing these services through the Puerto Rico Medicaid Program could also significantly reduce public expenses if medical coverage and be redirected to improve other health services.

It is essential that Congress assigns the necessary resources and funds to assist local governments in expanding medical services through Medicaid as cancer patients and other patients with different health conditions rely heavily on this coverage to access effective treatments and medications that they would not achieve in another medical insurance. This is especially true for patients in Puerto Rico with health Plan Vital (Puerto Rico Medicaid Program).

We urge Congress to pass legislation providing the necessary resources to ensure access to affordable and efficient health care services for Medicaid beneficiaries in Puerto Rico including coverage for long-term care services. The Association of Hematology and Oncology of Puerto Rico (AHOMPR) stand ready to assist you in any way possible.

Cordially,



Dr. Sixto Pérez  
President  
AHOMPR



Mrs. Jocelyn Serrano  
Executive Director  
AHOMPR