



Letter to the Editor – The New Orleans Advocate

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Ripple Effects of Medicaid Cuts

As CEO of Clover, I am keenly aware of Medicaid's impact on the well-being of people in our community. Clover annually serves nearly 10,000 children and families, many of whom receive their primary health care via Medicaid. We also operate the state's largest Adult Day Care facility, providing comprehensive services through Louisiana's Medicaid Waiver program to more than 60 adults and seniors needing continuous care. In my more than 20 years of experience as Clover's CEO, whenever Louisiana's Medicaid support is reduced, community-based options like Adult Day Care are almost always put on the chopping block, leaving those in need with no choice except placement in nursing homes. The state then uses Medicaid to pay those nursing homes which, paradoxically, ends up costing Louisiana taxpayers nearly three times more than non-residential alternatives like Clover.

These are the predictable outcomes of cuts to Medicaid. However, what policymakers who support these cuts don't want us to consider are the ripple effects. Here's an example: In addition to adults and seniors whose care is supported by Medicaid funding, Clover serves dozens of military veterans who require continuous care. While the VA assumes these costs, if Medicaid funding is eliminated, our entire program will no longer be financially sustainable and we will be forced to shut it down. This means that our veterans will lose the community-based care they want and deserve, leaving them with no other choice than placement in nursing homes, which, once again, will come at a much higher cost to Louisiana taxpayers!

Someone please explain to me how this makes any sense. Is this really what we want for our vulnerable adults, seniors and brave veterans? Please urge Senators Cassidy and Kennedy to stand up for Louisiana's citizens by rejecting the House budget bill and preserving Medicaid funding.

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About Clover

Founded in 1896 with a mission to educate children, strengthen families and build community, Clover (formerly Kingsley House) envisions a city and region where all young children are ready to succeed, and all citizens are healthy and economically stable. Recognizing that under-served families are at risk of being caught in an intractable cycle of poverty, the organization is committed to ensuring that individuals and families have the supports necessary to be successful at all stages of life. For more about Clover's mission and how to get involved, visit clovernola.org.

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