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For Further Information
Contact: Jennifer Barrows
Tel: 203-294-7213
Email: barrows@chime.org

CHA Responds to President's FY 2008 Budget Proposal

Wallingford, Connecticut, February 6, 2007 – In response to President Bush's call to cut more than \$100 billion in Medicare and Medicaid payments over the next five years, Jennifer Jackson, President and CEO of the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA), expressed profound concern.

“Connecticut hospitals have already been pushed to the limit, due to severe and chronic Medicare and Medicaid underpayments, over many, many years. We oppose the President's proposal, which would even further reduce payments for hospital services provided to the poor, elderly, and disabled,” said Jackson

The proposed cut comes at a time when the state is grappling with how more adequately to pay hospitals for such services – two recent government-sponsored reports have stated that Connecticut hospitals are suffering long-term effects from under-reimbursement that impinge upon their ability to adequately plan for the future and provide the fullest range of services.

“Do we or do we not want to provide the best care possible to our residents? That's the question,” asserted Jackson. “It appears that the administration's budget is not only ignoring our current plight, but its reductions will, in fact, help ensure that we never achieve fiscal solvency.”

Residents of Connecticut cannot afford to have their healthcare institutions suffer the implications of further cuts, when hospitals are already reeling from severe fiscal challenges.

“Hospitals are the cornerstones of their communities, providing care to all, regardless of an individual's ability to pay. This provision would put all of Connecticut residents at risk, since underpayment for services is already a huge issue, affecting every aspect of care delivery,” concluded Jackson.

CHA will join the American Hospital Association in vociferously opposing the President's budget in the coming months.

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