



June 28, 2017

The Honorable Bruce Rauner  
Governor, State of Illinois  
State Capitol Room 207  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Rauner:

On behalf of the physician members of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS), I strongly urge you to sign House Bill 311, the Network Adequacy and Transparency Act, into law.

House Bill 311 helps level the playing field for consumers who purchase state regulated health plans by requiring health plans to provide accurate provider information, build networks that include sufficient provider options, and protect patients from care disruption when their preferred provider is no longer in network. All signals from Washington, DC, indicate that states will need to assume more responsibility for protecting consumers who purchase health insurance and expect to receive appropriate and affordable health care when they need it most.

Hundreds of thousands of Illinois citizens have enrolled in state regulated preferred provider health insurance plans. Increasingly, these plans use “narrow” or “tiered” networks that only include an extremely limited number of health care professionals. Many patients, particularly those who need specialized providers, may not have adequate access to care and must pay significantly more out-of-pocket for important health care services because the needed health care specialists are not “in-network.” Issues with narrow-network plans are compounded by inaccurate network directories and limited options for patients when their health care professionals are no longer in the network. The shifting of provider networks, particularly when patients are not informed of the changes in a timely manner, causes disruptions to medical care that can have serious consequences for the health of patients.

House Bill 311 includes several important protections for patients in Illinois to ensure that their health insurance network will provide for the health care they need:

- Provides the Illinois Department of Insurance a framework to promulgate rules that enact standards to ensure that patients have access to necessary healthcare professionals, including specialists and appropriate health care facilities.

- Requires health insurers to provide notice to patients when their healthcare professional is no longer in a network. Under this provision, primary care physicians who leave the plan must also notify their patients.
- Allows patients with serious health conditions or who are pregnant to stay with their healthcare professional for a designated period of time if the network changes.
- Ensures that network directories are accurate and kept up-to-date for patients to make informed decisions about selecting both their health insurance plans and health professionals.

The provisions in House Bill 311 have been carefully negotiated with various stakeholders, including the Department of Insurance and representatives from the insurance industry. Since the bill was introduced, significant changes have been made to accommodate the concerns of the Department and the insurance industry while still preserving the core patient protections that are so important for our patients in Illinois. There is no opposition to this bill.

On behalf of the physicians of Illinois and our patients, ISMS respectfully asks that you sign House Bill 311 into law.

Sincerely,

Adrienne L. Fregia, M.D.  
Chair, Board of Trustees

cc: Nestor A. Ramirez, M.D., M.P.H.  
Katherine M. Tynus, M.D.  
Alexander R. Lerner