

February 14, 2023

SF404

Dear Senators on the Health and Human Services Committee:

My brother is on Medicaid and had a much-needed knee operation due to a birth defect that cause lop-sided gait. The doctor thought the facility, he decided to operate in 3 days before surgery, was in network and it wasn't. My brother was left with a huge bill that used up a large amount of his savings. He is now not able to work because the surgery on his other knee left his whole leg so swollen that it brings tears to his eyes when he walks. Two years later it is still quite swollen.

Our mother was also on Medicare/Medicaid. When she had doctor appointments, a family member would have to take time off work to drive her 90 miles and sometimes stay overnight for surgeries. There were doctors in a much closer town, however, her Medicaid insurance would not cover those doctors.

Reasons for support of Medicaid **Freedom to Choose**, SF404:

There are some Medical Assistance patients that already have the right of **Freedom to Choose**. All Medical Assistance patients must acquire the same rights that other Medicaid patients have.

It also opens up Medicaid in the sense that patients can go to any doctor, hospital or pharmacy that are located closer to home and will increase communication abilities.

Doctors of patients who take the **Freedom to Choose** option will get paid promptly by the state. This quick reimbursement will increase the number of practitioners who accept Medical Assistance patients.

I am advocating that all Medicaid patients must have the **Freedom to Choose** their own doctor, hospital and other medical practitioners. Please support **Freedom to Choose**, SF404.

Thank you,

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