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**N.H. GROUPS ASK EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOT TO RUSH MANAGED CARE CONTRACT**

CONCORD \_ A dozen organizations, representing thousands of New Hampshire citizens, signed and delivered a letter to the Executive Council today respectfully asking that it allow enough time for a public review the upcoming Medicaid managed care contracts.

The set of contracts, among the largest in the state’s history, is expected to go before the council on March 28 but may not be released to the public until March 23. Medicaid provides services to about 130,000 people in New Hampshire, about 10 percent of the population. Both those individuals and the agencies and health care providers that serve them will be affected by the contract.

“These are multi-year, multi-billion dollar contracts and should not be rushed through without giving the public a chance to review them. Many of our children, our frail elders and people with complex medical needs rely on Medicaid and need to know the new system will support the care they need to maintain their health and safety,” said Kelly Clark, state director of AARP New Hampshire.

Among the groups signing the letter are AARP New Hampshire, the Children’s Alliance, the New Hampshire Hospital Association, Granite State Independent Living, National Alliance on Mental Illness-NH and the New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute..

“Health care, particularly early screenings, are essential to children’s healthy development. Right now we know that nearly a quarter of New Hampshire children receive their health care through NH Healthy Kids, our Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program, so this transition stands to affect a lot of children across the state,” said Erika Argersinger, policy director for the Children’s Alliance of New Hampshire.

The letter to the Executive Council asks that it delay its vote for at least a month to allow interested and affected parties a chance to view the contracts and weigh in before the vote if there are questions or concerns.

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