

For immediate release
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**N.H. GROUPS THANK GOVERNOR AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
FOR GIVING MANAGED CARE CONTRACTS MORE TIME**

CONCORD _ Advocates who urged the Executive Council to provide more time to review a set of multi-year, multi-billion dollar contracts for Medicaid said they are grateful the council decided today to delay its vote on the matter.

"There is just too much a stake to rush this decision. We're thankful that the council has agreed to take the time to review these contracts before acting on them," said Kelly Clark, state director of AARP New Hampshire.

The set of contracts, among the largest in the state's history, was scheduled to be voted on by the governor and council today, only five days after they were released publicly.

Medicaid provides health care coverage to about 130,000 people in New Hampshire, including children, senior citizens and people with disabilities. The switch to a managed care system with private vendors represents a major shift for both Medicaid recipients and health care providers in the state.

A coalition of groups, including AARP New Hampshire, the Children's Alliance, the New Hampshire Hospital Association, Granite State Independent Living, National Alliance on Mental Illness-N.H. and the New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute, last week sent a letter to the council asking them to provide more time for review of the contracts, which cover 1,600 pages.

Deb Fournier, a policy analyst with the NH Fiscal Policy Institute, said today advocates hope to work with the council.

"We want to work with the council to ensure the private vendors who get these contracts are held accountable so that efficiencies can be achieved without sacrificing access to and quality of care," Fournier said.