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August 3, 2009

The Honorable Tim Rave  
Speaker of the House & Chairman  
Medicaid Reimbursement Study Subcommittee  
South Dakota House of Representatives  
South Dakota State Capitol  
500 E. Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Chairman Rave,

The South Dakota Pharmacists Association would like to provide written testimony regarding the study of Medicaid Reimbursement in South Dakota. We understand in these difficult economic times that all of us must strive for efficiencies, yet do our best to continue the level of service for those who face their own challenges, whether it be economically, physically or mentally.

The South Dakota Department of Social Services and the Medical Services Division, which houses the Medicaid program, is held in high regard by South Dakota's pharmacists. We work with them on a daily basis to serve a population of individuals who need care and have limited means. This work can be some of the most challenging, but absolutely rewarding work that providers and Medicaid personnel can face.

The Department of Social Services has always strived to embrace new and creative ideas to stretch their dollars, and still have done their best to treat pharmacists as fairly as possible. South Dakota Medicaid personnel have always been receptive and have always opened the door to pharmacists on any issue that justified a phone call, email or visit.

In 2003, the State Legislature, at the request of the Department of Social Services and Medical Services Division, created the Pharmaceutical & Therapeutics (P&T) Committee; a committee comprised of doctors and pharmacists working together to develop efficiencies and better methods to serve the Medicaid population. This committee has been extremely successful, and has saved significant dollars for the State of South Dakota.

We understand challenges will always exist, but we do not believe a provider tax is in the best interest of anyone, as it will almost certainly create a scenario where willing providers will no longer be able to afford to attend to those who need it most. Everyone walks the tightrope currently to stay supportive of the Medicaid Program.

We applaud the Medicaid Reimbursement Study Committee's research and efforts, and thank you for taking the time to review this important program.

Warm Regards,

Chris Sonnenschein  
President