

National Council of Jewish Women
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NCJW Opposes Medicaid Cuts

New York, NY – The Board of Directors of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) issued the following statement opposing the Medicaid cuts proposed in the President's fiscal year 2006 budget:

"The National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) has long supported Medicaid as a crucial support for low-income women and children. For 40 years, Medicaid has made health care available to millions of Americans who had no other access to the nation's health care system.

"Over 70 percent of Medicaid's adult beneficiaries are women. Women are twice as likely as men to qualify for the program, largely because women are poorer and less likely to get health insurance through their jobs when they are employed. Medicaid serves one-third of all poor women, is the largest source of health insurance for single mothers, and pays for 40 percent of all births in the US. Medicaid provides a wide variety of health services to its recipients, including family planning, physician and hospital care, pregnancy-related care, mental health services, and diagnoses and treatment for chronic illnesses including breast cancer, cervical cancer, and HIV/AIDS.

"This program is also critical for older women. In fact, 42 percent of Medicaid expenditures are for services to people also on Medicare. In particular, many older women rely upon Medicaid to offset nursing home and long-term care expenses, which are so costly, that they often compel families to declare bankruptcy.

"The President's proposed 2006 budget would cut \$45 billion from the program over the next 10 years. This comes at a time when poverty is up, wages are down, and the number of uninsured people is at a record high.

"NCJW believes that we have a moral obligation to care for the less fortunate and should not be cutting critical health and other services for those in need. Congress and the President must expand eligibility, broaden the range of available and guaranteed services, and work to enroll more low-income people in Medicaid."

NCJW is a volunteer organization, inspired by Jewish values, that works to improve the quality of life for women, children, and families and to ensure

individual rights and freedoms for all through its network of 90,000 members, supporters, and volunteers nationwide.

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