

SAMPLE LETTER TO STATE LEGISLATORS
FROM HOSPITAL AND NURSING HOME CEOs/EMPLOYEES
ON GOVERNOR PATAKI'S BUDGET

Dear [Assemblyman/woman/Senator ____]:

[I/We] are writing on behalf of [Facility Name] to express [my/our] opposition to the health care proposals in Governor Pataki's Executive Budget. On behalf of our institution and the community we serve, [I/we] believe that the Executive Budget, which calls for \$1.3 billion dollars in health care funding cuts, including severe Medicaid reimbursement cuts to hospitals and nursing homes and the shifting of millions of dollars in costs to Medicaid beneficiaries through increased co-payments, eligibility changes, and benefit reductions, would undermine the provision of health care in New York State. We need your help to protect this institution and the patients and communities we serve.

The proposed budget would cut critically important hospital funding by over \$160 million and vital nursing home funding by over \$230 million, with the total loss to these institutions climbing to well over half a billion dollars, factoring in the consequent loss of Federal reimbursement. In addition, the cost shifting to beneficiaries would place an enormous financial burden on those least able to afford it and will deter people from seeking the health care services they need and deserve.

We at [facility name] work hard every day to provide the best health care and quality of life for the patients and communities we serve. This is our commitment to our patients and the standard that we strive to meet every day of the week. Our patients—your constituents—deserve nothing less. Unfortunately, the proposed budget would be disastrous to New York's already financially reeling health care community. Hospitals have suffered seven consecutive years of bottom line losses and more than half of New York's nursing homes and certified home health agencies are losing money. The skyrocketing costs of pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, caring for the uninsured, and, most dramatically, malpractice insurance have created huge financial pressures while payments from private payers, Medicaid, and Medicare have been spiraling relentlessly downward.

In addition, the proposed Medicaid cuts are wholly inconsistent with the ongoing work of the Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century. The Governor and the State Legislature created the Commission precisely because the hospital and nursing home communities are in such dire financial straits, with a rash of haphazard closings and bankruptcies occurring across the State. The Commission's charge is to rationalize the downsizing process and recommend restructuring to ultimately strengthen the hospital and nursing home communities so that they can provide high-quality health care services in a more efficient manner and make necessary capital improvements. These Medicaid

cuts are contrary to the purpose of the Commission by further jeopardizing those financially strapped institutions in the communities that need them most.

Therefore, as our elected representative in Albany, I urge you to oppose the Governor's health care budget. We are counting on you to save New York's health care and preserve our ability to serve the people that reside in your district. The health care of all New Yorkers is at stake.

Thank you for your support. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

LETTERS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED AS FOLLOWS:

The Honorable [Name of Member of the Assembly]	<i>OR</i>	The Honorable [Name of Sen.]
New York State Assembly		New York State Senate
Albany, NY 12248		Albany, NY 12247