



CALIFORNIA COLLABORATIVE FOR LONG-TERM SERVICES & SUPPORTS (CCLTSS)

December 11, 2017

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House of Representatives
233 Cannon H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

RE: The BENES Act (H.R. 2575) - SUPPORT

Dear Congresswoman Pelosi:

The California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports is comprised of 35 statewide aging and disability organizations that promote dignity and independence in long-term living. Our members include advocates, providers, labor and health insurers. Collectively we represent millions of California seniors and people with disabilities, their caregivers and those who provide health, human services and housing.

Based on our expertise in serving the aging and disability populations, and our knowledge of the consequences for errors made in the Medicare enrollment process, we are writing to ask for your support in helping to pass the Beneficiary Enrollment Notification and Eligibility Simplification (BENES) Act, (H.R. 2575) by the end of this year.

The BENES Act is bipartisan legislation that simplifies the Medicare Part B enrollment process and helps new enrollees avoid incurring fees and penalties for late enrollment. It requires CMS to issue enhanced notification to people becoming eligible for Medicare because of age or disability, and to provide information about coordination of Medicare coverage with other health insurance to avoid costly

enrollment mistakes and lengthy gaps in health care coverage for seniors and people with disabilities.

People who have medical coverage at the time they become eligible for Medicare face a bewildering array of complicated rules regarding Medicare coverage and other types of existing health benefits from employers, COBRA, and more recently Marketplace coverage. Mistakes in understanding these complex enrollment rules often result in a Late Enrollment Penalty (LEP) and a gap in the effective date of Medicare coverage. In 2014, 750,000 people with Medicare were paying a Part B penalty, and the average LEP amounted to nearly a 30 percent increase in a beneficiary's monthly premium.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurel A. Mildred".

Laurel Mildred, MSW

For the California Collaborative

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