



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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25th Senate District

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Answering Questions About Medicaid

Sen. Mayer's office is always available to hear your health-care queries

JEFFERSON CITY – Public officials are supposed to be available to all constituent concerns, because their salaries are paid for by taxpayers. So when it was reported July 20 that a memo issued by the head of the Missouri Division of Family Support directed employees not to tell Medicaid recipients to contact their lawmakers with Medicaid questions, I felt it was my responsibility to let all my constituents know that my office is always open to phone calls.

I understand the department was trying to ensure that Missouri caseworkers do their job of informing Medicaid beneficiaries of current reforms, but I want to guarantee that my doors are always open to give constituents all the information they might need.

While we are in the middle of tough economic times, there are many ways hard-working Missourians can ease the financial burden of their health-care needs. Missouri's Senior Rx program, which was established in 2001, offers prescription-drug benefits to people with limited incomes. More than 58,000 Missourians have received benefits from the program, with \$800 in average annual savings. On January 1, the Missouri Rx plan will replace Senior Rx in order to complement recent expansions to the federal Medicare Part D program.

For additional help with prescription-drug matters, Missourians can also call Community Leaders Assisting the Insured in Missouri (CLAIM) at (800) 390-3330 or The Medicine Program at (573) 996-7300.

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Communities can also work together to ensure all Missourians receive affordable health care. Church and civil organizations can find ways for members to look out for each other in tough times. Local clinics offer cheaper doctor visits and prescription drugs. Individuals can also ask their doctors for free samples or generic versions of the prescription drugs they are taking.

While lawmakers work to draft a new state Medicaid system to replace the old system, we are also here to help ensure Missourians receive the health coverage they need. I want all of my constituents to feel they can always call my office with questions concerning Medicaid or any other issue. The more Missourians are involved in the process of creating a new state health-care system as it comes to a vote in the Senate next session, the better lawmakers can provide services to you, your family and your friends.

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*Senator Robert Mayer represents the people of Wayne, Ripley, Butler, Stoddard, New Madrid,
Pemiscot and Dunklin counties in the Missouri Senate.*