



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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For Immediate Release:
April 6, 2006

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Sen. Alter Comments on Bill Cracking Down on Medicaid-Provider Fraud

JEFFERSON CITY—The following is a statement from Sen. Bill Alter, R-High Ridge, about a measure that was recently debated on the Senate floor. Senate Bill 1210 targets fraud and abuse by Medicaid providers, which costs Missouri taxpayers as much as \$575 million a year.

The legislation increases criminal penalties for anyone who commits fraud to a Class C felony, requires convicted felons to serve at least 85 percent of their sentence before they could be eligible for parole and permanently bans perpetrators from participating in the program. Also in the bill are provisions encouraging whistleblowers to file suit on behalf of the state against the defrauders.

“For the past few years, Medicaid has been on the path toward insolvency. One reason for this is the medical providers who steal from the state’s most vulnerable citizens by doing such things as overstating the number of hours devoted to Medicaid recipients and billing Medicaid multiple times for the same service or for prescriptions that the patients never ordered. This despicable crime needs to be addressed as soon as possible.

“By strengthening the penalties against those who cheat the Medicaid system and offering incentives for reporting fraud, we can weed out the doctors, pharmacists and other health-benefit providers whose personal greed bulldozes their morals while on the job. The sooner we punish those who aren’t playing by the rules, the sooner Medicaid can be fully utilized for its intended purpose — to give the state’s neediest citizens access to quality health care.”

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