



**Association for Behavioral
Health and Wellness**

*Advancing benefits and services
in mental health, substance use
and behavior change.*

May 21, 2015

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Brown:

The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) is writing to express support for S. 428, the *Stabilize Medicaid and CHIP Coverage Act of 2015*. This bill will ensure that Americans who need Medicaid and CHIP will have continuous health care coverage, which will help improve the overall health and continuity of care for tens of millions of individuals in these programs.

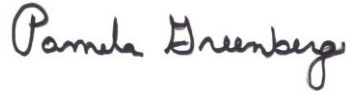
ABHW is an association of the nation's leading behavioral health and wellness companies. These companies provide an array of services related to mental health, substance use, employee assistance, disease management, and other health and wellness programs to approximately 150 million people in both the public and private sectors. ABHW and its member companies use their behavioral health expertise to improve health care outcomes for individuals and families across the health care spectrum.

ABHW is concerned that despite their eligibility, millions of people who enroll in Medicaid and CHIP each year subsequently lose their coverage because of burdensome paperwork and other reporting requirements. In addition, many individuals lose their coverage due to short-term income fluctuations, which may create a disincentive for earning higher incomes. These coverage disruptions negatively affect the continuity and effectiveness of health care received and can seriously impact the health status of these individuals. Of equal importance is the fact that these interruptions in coverage result in higher avoidable administrative costs for states, providers, and payers.

Your proposal for a 12-month continuous enrollment period will dramatically improve continuity of coverage for enrollees. We also believe that, at a time when states and local agencies are looking for solutions to reduce administrative cost burdens, 12-month continuous enrollment will help to further reduce administrative expenses caused by the cycle of enrollment and disenrollment, or "churning", in the Medicaid program.

Again, thank you for your leadership on this important piece of legislation. The *Stabilize Medicaid and CHIP Coverage Act* offers a common-sense solution to modernize the Medicaid and CHIP programs, and we are happy to lend our support for this legislation. If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Murow Klein at (202) 449-7658 or klein@abhw.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela Greenberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pamela Greenberg
President and CEO, ABHW