**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear [Legislator’s name or Governor’s name]:

As the governor of the [insert state] chapter of the American College of Physicians, representing [add chapter membership] internal medicine physician specialists and medical students in our state, I am writing on behalf of our chapter to urge action on common sense policies designed to ensure continued health coverage and essential benefits for my patients and residents of our state, strengthen and expand Medicaid, and stabilize the health insurance market, as noted below.

Our chapter is part of the American College of Physicians, which nationally represents 154,000 internal medicine physician specialists and medical student members. As physicians, we are on the front lines of patient care every day, which means caring for patients with pre-existing or chronic conditions, helping them manage multiple prescription drugs, out-of-pocket costs, insurance requirements, and treating their illnesses. As such, we are asking our state to lead the way when it comes to ensuring:

* Access to comprehensive and affordable health coverage, including essential health benefits, as provided currently under federal law. If the recent court ruling by a federal judge in Texas declaring the Affordable Care Act unconstitutional is allowed to stand, my patients could suffer irreparable harm. They could once again be turned down or charged more for pre-existing conditions, and insurers would no longer be required to cover essential benefits like prescription drugs, maternity care, doctor visits, and mental health and substance use disorder treatment. [ADD IF APPLICABLE: We are very disappointed that our state is a plaintiff in this case known as Texas v. United States and we are urging you to withdraw our state from the case immediately. Or - We are very pleased that our state is not one of the plaintiffs in this case known as Texas v. United States.]
* Patients who rely on Medicaid for their care are not forced to comply with work requirements as a condition of their enrollment. Work requirements impose an additional, unnecessary barrier to allowing patients access to vital health care services. [ADD IF APPLICABLE: We are very disappointed that our state has imposed/is seeking to impose such work requirements on our Medicaid beneficiaries and we are urging you to reverse course immediately. Or - We are very pleased that our state has not included work requirements as a condition of receiving Medicaid and we hope that will continue.]
* Skimpy health insurance plans that do not cover comprehensive medical care or provide essential health benefits should not be allowed to proliferate in our state. These plans, known as Short-Term, Limited-Duration Insurance Plans, are wreaking havoc with patients’ lives because they are not required to include a pre-existing condition exclusion prohibition, coverage of essential health benefits without annual or lifetime dollar limits, preventive care, or maternity and prescription drug coverage – the very hallmarks of what health insurance is supposed to cover! That means that patients who purchase such plans find themselves, surprisingly, with exorbitant out-of-pocket costs for the most basic care. [ADD IF APPLICABLE: We are very disappointed that our state does not limit the sale of these short-term coverage plans, which has allowed these plans to now proliferate in our state – to the detriment of our patients. Please take the necessary steps to curb this practice. Or – We are very pleased that our state has taken steps to limit the sale of these short-term coverage plans.]

We are counting on your support to take necessary action on the above and to look out for the health and welfare of patients in our state as you deliberate on future health care reforms.

Yours truly,

[Insert name]

Governor

[Insert state] Chapter of the American College of Physicians