



For Immediate Release:

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The following statement is attributable to Deborah Fasser on behalf of the New York State Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans:

“The final 2014-15 New York State Budget includes legislation to protect consumers from outrageous, unexpected medical bills from out-of-network physicians. Contained within the legislation are many positive provisions, which the Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans support. These provisions will help provide greater transparency for individuals, families and businesses through enhanced disclosure of provider charges and reimbursement methodology, the establishment of a new independent dispute resolution process, calling for reasonable provider payments, and restricting the ability of providers from seeking enhanced reimbursement from consumers (a practice known as “balanced billing”).

At the same time, unfortunately, there are a number of provisions within the agreement that will increase the cost of coverage, including a requirement to provide a more costly out-of-network benefit should a group or individual ask to include it in their policy, as well as confusing disclosure requirements and onerous implementation challenges. All of which, we are extremely concerned about and will seek to minimize the negative impact on our members.”

The New York State Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans (NYSCOP) is a partnership of Rochester-based Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield and New York City-based Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield. Together, the two health insurance plans provide comprehensive health coverage for millions of New Yorkers and are dedicated to educating the public through in-depth research and analysis of the cost, access and quality of health care.

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