

For Immediate Release:

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Health Plans Support Legislation to End Excessive Hospital Bills

The New York State Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans applauds Governor Cuomo in signing legislation which is designed to prohibit excessive hospital bills for emergency services and will protect New Yorkers from unnecessary premium increases.

In 2014, New York State enacted a groundbreaking law to create an independent dispute resolution process (IDR) to protect consumers from “surprise” medical bills from out-of-network physicians. The law did not cover charges billed by non-participating hospitals for emergency services.

This bill would close a loophole in the original “surprise bill” law by including out-of-network hospitals in the IDR process. Consumers will be removed from the process and will feel protected knowing that the fees charged by hospitals are subject to an independent third party.

By signing this bill into law non-participating hospitals will be restricted from charging unreasonably high fees for emergency services that must be paid by insurers, driving up the cost of health insurance for New Yorkers.

A recent Department of Financial Services report revealed that the current out-of-network law has saved New Yorkers hundreds of millions of dollars. It only makes sense for the State to take the lead once again and similarly put an end to excessive hospital bills.

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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.

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