

THE COALITION

OF BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH
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A non-profit tax-exempt
organization representing
New York City's community-
Based behavioral health sector.

April 20, 2010

Editor, NY POST

Dear Editor:

Your April 17th editorial, "Fraudster's Friend in Albany," unfairly attacks Assemblyman Richard Gottfried for introducing legislation that would actually help in the fight against Medicaid fraud. Contrary to your editorial, nothing in the Gottfried proposal would limit how much the Office of Medicaid Inspector General (OMIG) could recover or prevent OMIG from shutting down fraudulent operators.

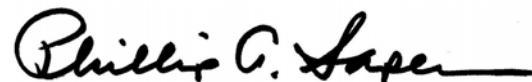
In fact, the proposed bill would do just the opposite: by making sure that OMIG treated honest providers in a fair and reasonable way, OMIG would be encouraged to direct its considerable resources and investigative power to those health care providers that are actually ripping off the system. The Assemblyman's proposal would, among other things, require OMIG to abide by the applicable regulations and policies that govern Medicaid service delivery would establish fair procedures that allow providers to correct inadvertent billing errors and would limit OMIG's most aggressive recoupment efforts to those cases that involve real fraud.

If the health care system is as rife with real fraud as the editorial suggests, there will be plenty of targets for OMIG's enforcement efforts. These reasonable proposals by Assemblyman Gottfried will only protect honest health care providers from being unfairly deprived of Medicaid payments for services actually rendered to needy patients.

On behalf of the over 100 not-for-profit behavioral health providers that are part of our Coalition, we are at least as outraged by Medicaid fraud as the *New York Post*. Providers that abuse the system diminish our reputations and divert precious resources to their own pockets.

Just like the IRS, though, OMIG should be required to play by clear and fair rules and should not meet its Medicaid recovery quota on the backs of dedicated and honest health care providers.

Sincerely yours,



Phillip A. Saperia
Executive Director