



CONTACT:
Megan Myers
Director of Communications
South Dakota State Medical Association
605-336-1965
605-610-4878 cell
mmyers@sdsma.org

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DISAPPOINTED WITH GOVERNOR ROUNDS' MEDICAID PROPOSAL

SIOUX FALLS, SD – January 22, 2009 – The South Dakota State Medical Association is disappointed with Governor Rounds' lowering of Medicaid reimbursement rates in the fiscal 2010 budget year.

Governor Rounds' updated 2010 budget released today removes the scheduled 1.5 percent Medicaid reimbursement update originally proposed. The original update already was half of the 3 percent inflationary increase approved in recent budget years.

At the onset of the 2009 legislative session, SDSMA argues that lawmakers cannot ignore the health care needs of individuals who need Medicaid services in South Dakota. As health care delivery costs continue to grow, the cost to care for patients on Medicaid is increasing and is becoming a huge burden for many physicians.

A recent survey by the nonprofit Physicians' Foundation found that 65 percent of physicians nationwide said Medicaid reimbursement is less than their cost of providing care.

SDSMA advocates that steps be taken to assure adequate funding for the health and wellness of South Dakotans who depend on this program, including disabled people, poor people, the elderly and children.

"Those are the people who are least able to cope in an economic downturn. The state must do everything it can to ensure those people receive medical care," said SDSMA President Cynthia A. Weaver, MD.

Medicaid reimbursement needs to keep pace and grow with inflation and utilization increases. The SDSMA will continue to advocate for Medicaid reimbursement to maintain or increase its current levels.

The SDSMA serves more than 1,900 members, including physicians, members and medical students who are dedicated to the health of South Dakotans. The mission of the SDSMA is to promote the art and science of medicine, to protect and improve the health of the public and provide leadership and advocacy in the field of quality health care. Learn more about the SDSMA at www.sdsma.org.