



January 28, 2020

Governor JB Pritzker
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Pritzker:

I write this letter in support of the many concerned foster parents I represent in the 64th House District regarding the transition of our youth in care from traditional Medicaid to Medicaid managed care. While I was glad to learn that your administration has agreed to delay the transition from February 1, 2020 to April 1, 2020, I believe that delaying the transition for a year may be in order to address the concerns expressed by child welfare experts and foster parents.

As I am sure you would agree, the health and well-being our youth in care who are in the charge of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) must be our top priority. While the transition to managed care is intended to improve the healthcare available to these vulnerable children, it is clear that IlliniCare is not yet ready for this responsibility. Serious concerns exist about the provider network needed to meet the specialized care needs of these children.

As the state is still pursuing the transition of now adopted youth in care and young adults under age 26 who have aged out of the foster care system onto Medicaid managed care on February 1, 2020, I believe this represents an opportunity for evaluation before transitioning the more than 17,000 youth in care in the foster care system. Not only will this help sort of potential transition issues and give more time for IlliniCare to improve its provider network, but I also believe it will give us time to determine the success of the other five managed care providers that are available to adoptees and aged out youth in care. If this transition and access to additional providers proves successful, delaying a year will then allow the legislature the opportunity to update the law and ensure better healthcare access for all our youth in care.

I stand ready to work with your administration and, if legislative action is necessary, my colleagues in the legislature to ensure the health and well-being our youth in care is protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Weber".

Tom Weber
State Representative - 64th District

cc: Marc D. Smith, Acting Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Theresa Eagleson, Director, Department of Healthcare and Family Services