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January 22, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor  
State of California  
1303 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing to express concern over reports from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that California misused over \$1.3 billion in federal Medicaid funds – the largest amount of any state – to provide non-emergency healthcare services for illegal aliens. This raises serious issues regarding California’s improper use of taxpayer dollars and jeopardizes access to care for California’s legal residents who depend most on these vital healthcare services.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 prohibits illegal aliens from accessing most federal benefits, including Medicaid. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 included language to further limit Medicaid eligibility to lawful permanent residents, with limited exceptions. While Medicaid funds may cover emergency services regardless of immigration status, CMS’s audit revealed that these federal dollars were improperly used for non-emergency care for illegal aliens.

Such misuse and diversion of resources away from California’s most vulnerable citizens reflects a failure to responsibly manage taxpayer funds. According to the California Legislative Analyst’s Office, the state spent over \$3 billion dollars on healthcare for more than 1,150,000 illegal aliens in 2020.<sup>1</sup> With almost 2.3 million illegal aliens currently living in California,<sup>2</sup> these costs have almost certainly increased significantly since then.

On January 19, CMS formally requested that California reimburse the federal government for Medicaid funds that were improperly claimed. I respectfully request clarification on the following matters:

<sup>1</sup> <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2020/4161/Medi-Cal-Budget-021420.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://pewrsr.ch/4mQTPFV>

1. When will your administration cease providing Medicaid-funded healthcare services to individuals who are not legally eligible under federal law?
2. What is your administration's plan and timeline to repay the federal funds that CMS has determined were improperly claimed?
3. What steps and safeguards will be implemented to prevent future misuse of federal Medicaid funds?
4. What measures will your administration enact to prioritize Medicaid resources for American citizens who are most in need and verify compliance with federal Medicaid eligibility rules?

I look forward to your responses so that we can continue to protect Americans' access to healthcare and restore fiscal responsibility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "YK".

Young Kim  
Member of Congress