*SAMPLE LETTER FROM LEGISLATOR TO CONFERENCE LEADER*

February xx, 2019

Dear Leader/Speaker,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal in the Executive Budget that would reduce nursing home funding by altering how Medicaid rates are adjusted for acuity. The Department of Health and the Division of the Budget project that the cut would reduce reimbursement to nursing homes by $246 million annually. This is the single biggest proposed Medicaid cut in the FY 2020 Executive Budget.

On average, a cut of this severity would reduce Medicaid rates by more than $9 per resident day. Nursing homes have received no inflation adjustment to Medicaid rates for 11 years, yet face annually increasing costs, especially those related to retaining and attracting qualified staff. A cut of this magnitude would endanger the homes that serve the residents of my district.

The increasing ability of nursing homes to provide more complex medical care, the greater availability of long term care services in the community, and state and federal efforts to reduce avoidable hospital use all combine to raise the acuity level of the nursing home population.

Facilities that serve residents with greater needs require more, not less, funding to support the added costs. I urge you to reject this proposal, which threatens quality of care.

Sincerely,