

**For Immediate Release
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Statement from Governor Ronnie Musgrove on the 2003 Medicaid Budget

The Legislature's failure to fully fund Medicaid will have a devastating effect on health care in Mississippi. The \$120 million shortfall will mean a loss of almost \$500 million in health care dollars. The only option will be to cut vital health care services to our seniors, children and disabled. Today's action puts at serious risk the Prescription Drug program as well as the thousands of senior citizens who rely on Medicaid in our Nursing Homes. This loss of health care dollars will also have a dramatic effect on the access to healthcare because of the impact on the providers like rural nursing homes and local pharmacists.