

**For Immediate Release**

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(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove announced today the formation of a panel of health care providers, recipients and professionals within the Division of Medicaid to assist with the restructuring of the Medicaid program in Mississippi. The authority of the Governor's office to restructure the program was affirmed today in an opinion issued by the Attorney General.

"Today, we begin the real work of making Medicaid work for the people of Mississippi," Musgrove said. "When I vetoed the Medicaid bills earlier this month, one reason was to fight for the flexibility to manage the program efficiently and effectively. With that flexibility in place, along with the assurance of funding from the Legislature, I am confident we can craft a Medicaid program that meets the needs of those who need it most."

Musgrove also said he still plans to call a special session dealing with the quarterly provisions of House Bill 1794, which restricts Medicaid spending and provision of medical services.

"Until this provision is removed from the law, we cannot fully provide the quality health care services needed by 650,000 Mississippians," said Musgrove. "The law as written could prevent us from making any obligations for medical services, and that is in direct conflict with the mission and responsibility of the Division of Medicaid."

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