

92GMSSB1978

State of Illinois  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
Springfield, Illinois 62706

George H. Ryan  
GOVERNOR

August 2, 2002

To the Honorable Members of  
The Illinois Senate  
92nd General Assembly

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(b) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby veto Senate Bill 1978, "AN ACT in relation to public aid."

Senate Bill 1978 creates the Medicaid Hospital and Physician Payment Task Force to study the adequacy of hospital and physician rates in the Illinois Medicaid program. The bill requires the task force to issue a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2003.

There are two factors concerning Senate Bill 1978 that are troubling. First, the formal establishment of a Medicaid reimbursement task force through legislation is unnecessary. The Department of Public Aid already conducts analysis concerning the adequacy of Medicaid reimbursement as a matter of routine, without the need for a new State law compelling this activity. In fact, the Department of Public Aid often discusses Medicaid rate issues and shares data with representatives of hospitals and physicians.

Secondly, pending litigation brought by advocacy organizations representing Medicaid recipients against the Department of Public Aid and the Department of Human Services would prevent the task force from operating in an atmosphere necessary to accomplish the goals set forth in Senate Bill 1978. Such a task force requires an open and free exchange of ideas and information, which cannot take place in the presence of litigation.

For these reasons, I hereby veto and return Senate Bill 1978.

Sincerely,  
George H. Ryan  
GOVERNOR