



RETINA CENTER

O F V E R M O N T

Date: 4/18/2023

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Sen. Philip Baruth
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Dear Chair Kitchel and Members of the Vermont Senate Appropriations Committee,


The purpose of this letter is to urge you to include--at minimum--a 3.8% inflationary increase in the 2024 Resource-Based Relative Value Scale (RBRVS) fee schedule for Vermont Medicaid. As you know, Vermont's House Health Care Committee has recently made this increase their top budget recommendation for Fiscal Year 2024.

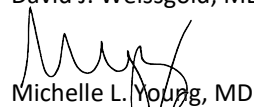
In recent years, virtually all businesses on which medical practices rely to maintain their operations have been increasing their own prices at unprecedented rates. Meanwhile, medical practices are experiencing annual payment cuts from Medicare and from private insurance groups whose fee schedules are based on Medicare's.

Retina Center of Vermont (RCV) is a three-doctor Ophthalmology practice located in South Burlington, serving Vermonters across the economic spectrum and from all geographic areas of the state. We aim to provide the highest quality care. However, due to the insurance payment cuts that we have been facing each year it is becoming increasingly difficult to fulfill our mission and remain viable. Vermont Medicaid is RCV's most poorly reimbursing payor. Collectively, we have more than four decades' of history providing care to Medicaid beneficiaries in Vermont, and we value that track record. We are positive our patients value the care and personal service we provide. However, the widening gap between operating costs and reimbursement rates leaves us concerned about the viability of our own participation in the Medicaid program, and we are certain that most—if not all—medical practices in Vermont are equally concerned.


If you believe Vermonters deserve access to high-quality, affordable medical care in their own communities, rendered by doctors who are their lifelong neighbors, and to whom they can relate, and in whom they trust, we urge you to provide a 3.8%, or greater, "across-the-boards" increase in Medicaid's fee schedule for 2024. Our region's small medical practices cannot afford a stagnated fee schedule.

Sincerely,


David J. Weissgold, MD


Michelle L. Young, MD


John W. Hinkle, MD


Aaron Mitton, Practice Administrator