**Draft Message for DCs – Copy & Paste**

Governor Newsom,

My name is **X**, a doctor of chiropractic practicing in the **X** area. I write to you today to respectfully urge you to restore the Medi-Cal chiropractic optional benefit for adult beneficiaries and remove the 2 visit a month Medi-Cal cap. I strongly support the restoration of the Chiropractic Medi-Cal Optional Benefit, which has been championed by Senator Nancy Skinner and included in the Senate’s version of 2023-24 State Budget.

The expansion of Medi-Cal made possible by the Affordable Care Act has been successful in providing many of the most vulnerable populations in California health care coverage. Medi-Cal is a vital coverage component in our healthcare system as it assists our most low-income and vulnerable populations gain access to health care providers and services. As part of ensuring that more Californians have access to adequate health services, the California Legislature has worked towards restoring Medi-Cal Optional Benefits that were cut over a decade ago. The state has restored services such as optical services, podiatry, speech therapy, and incontinence creams and washes. However, chiropractic benefits have yet to be restored for the adult population of Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

Restoring the chiropractic Medi-Cal option comes at a low cost and yields cost savings and increased access to health providers, an important pain management alternative to combat the opioid epidemic. The 2018 state estimate for restoring chiropractic benefits on an annual basis would cost $1,707,000 million – chiropractic is the second to least costly benefit when compared to the other optional benefits that have been restored. For this modest investment, millions of Medi-Cal beneficiaries will have access to Doctors of Chiropractic (DCs) that have proven to be effective in providing nonpharmacological treatments to pain, reducing the need for prescription drugs such as opioids, and reducing the need for costly surgical interventions.

Chiropractic is a proven safe, long-term, solution to pain and restoring the benefits will ensure that Medi-Cal beneficiaries have access to another health provider. DCs are widely accessible in communities across the state, both in rural and urban locations. You can find our doctors working in various settings – as independent providers, in hospitals, in rural clinics, and in multidisciplinary health teams. DCs are working alongside other health providers, referring to one another, but are faced with Medi-Cal limitations other providers are not subjected to. Even though DCs are widely available, adult Medi-Cal patients and providers are unable to access one another at a time when chiropractic care is urgently needed. Additionally, populations that do retain a chiropractic benefit often are forced to settle for inadequate treatment options due to the Medi-Cal two-visit per month limitation that arbitrarily interrupts sound clinical judgment. These limitations lead Medi-Cal beneficiaries, who are low-income residents, to pay for chiropractic services out of pocket, forgo treatment options, or simply turn towards pain management prescriptions without addressing the root cause of their pain.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and your approval of this restoration in the final 2023-24 State Budget.

Sincerely,

**XXXXXXX**