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Reckless filibuster threatens Missouri's health care system

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — As representatives of Missouri's health care, business and community sectors, we urgently call upon Senator Bill Eigel and the members of the Freedom Caucus to immediately cease their destructive filibuster blocking the renewal of the Federal Reimbursement Allowance (FRA). This critical funding mechanism is vital for sustaining essential health care services across our state, and without the reauthorization of this program, Missouri will face an insurmountable budget deficit that will devastate the state's financial outlook and slow economic development.

For nearly 24 hours, the Missouri Senate has been paralyzed by a filibuster led by the Freedom Caucus, endangering the well-being of millions of Missourians. With only two weeks remaining to pass crucial legislation, it is imperative to remind Senator Eigel that seeking higher office does not absolve him of his current duties. Effective governance requires more than grandstanding for media attention—it demands a steadfast commitment to serving the public.

The stakes of failing to renew the FRA are extraordinarily high:

- **Children with chronic illnesses will lose access to life-saving treatments** as funding cuts threaten pediatric health care services.
- **Nursing homes will face closure**, leaving families in distress, unable to find safe and caring places for their loved ones. This would not only displace our most vulnerable, elderly, disabled and veterans, but also place an unbearable emotional and logistical burden on families across our state.
- **Rural hospitals, the lifeline for their communities, will shut down**, leaving vast areas without critical emergency care and preventative services.
- **Mental health services will collapse under the financial strain**, turning away those in desperate need of help.
- **Pharmacy services will be hit hard**, leading to a significant reduction in access to affordable essential medications. Imagine a parent unable to fill a prescription for their child's asthma inhaler or an elderly couple struggling to obtain heart medication.

- **Emergency services, particularly ambulance services**, will face significant defunding, jeopardizing the availability of swift medical response and rescue operations during critical times. For instance, in rural Missouri, where the nearest hospital might be miles away, delayed ambulance responses due to reduced funding may be the difference between life and death. Imagine a scenario where a heart attack patient waits crucial extra minutes for help or a severe accident victim cannot get immediate transport, all because our ambulance services lack the resources to operate.

These are not mere warnings; they are the grim realities we face if Senator Eigel and his colleagues continue to prioritize political spectacle over practical governance.

We commend the Senate leaders who strive tirelessly to defend Missouri's interests against the chaos sown by a few. To those standing in the way of progress: Your tactics harm the very individuals you pledge to serve. This behavior is not leadership; it represents an abandonment of your responsibilities.

We urge you to set aside personal political ambitions and bring the FRA bill to a vote. Your refusal to act responsibly is crafting a scenario that will devastate Missouri's health care system and cause irreparable damage to countless lives.

We call on you to lead with compassion, foresight and an unwavering commitment to the welfare of all Missourians. Our state, our communities and our families deserve nothing less.

In solidarity,

**Missouri Hospital Association
Missouri Health Care Association
Missouri Pharmacy Association
Missouri Ambulance Association
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

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