

Dear **(Employee/Team Member)**:

I am writing to ask for your help with an issue that is absolutely critical to the well-being of our patients and to our mission as a healthcare provider.

Florida is facing a budget shortfall that could have a devastating impact on the lives of the patients we serve and the financial health of **(hospital/health system)**, as well as other hospitals around the state. Economists predict that state legislators may have to make budget cuts of as much as \$4 billion in the upcoming legislative session. A primary target for those cuts will be the Medicaid programs. Most vulnerable are the more than 45,000 Floridians who are part of the Medically Needy and Aged/Disabled programs. Many of these patients cannot find private health insurance because of their health condition. For some, Medically Needy is their **ONLY HOPE** for coverage.

We do not have to look far to see the negative effects our slowing economy is having on our local community. Already, **(hospital/health system name)** is seeing an increase in uninsured patients. The loss of coverage for the Medicaid Medically Needy and Medicaid Aged/Disabled patients could have a significant impact on our hospital and the community we serve. **(Add 1-2 sentences describing a possible impact at your hospital.)**

***It is time to act.*** In conjunction with the Florida Hospital Association and others, we have joined the “Coalition to Heal Florida’s Healthcare,” a broad-based group that is advocating for a \$1.00 per pack increase in Florida’s tobacco tax. Legislative passage of this increase would bring up to \$1.2 billion in revenues to support not only the Medicaid Medically Needy and Medicaid Aged/Disabled programs, but 18 other health-related services as well.

***I am asking all employees to get involved in the Coalition’s campaign.*** At the Coalition’s Web site, **[www.fha.org/coalition](http://www.fha.org/coalition)**, you will find detailed information and easy-to-use tools for making your voice heard. Send letters to your state legislators, alert friends and neighbors about the crisis, and sign up as a Coalition member. The process is simple; a couple of mouse clicks and you will be fully engaged in the grassroots effort to increase the tobacco tax and ensure healthcare to all Floridians.

Please go to the Web site **today**. If you have no access to the Internet at home or work, call **(give name/extension of an internal contact who can make a computer with Internet access available to employees)** to contact the Coalition or your state legislator. A list of those representatives are listed below:

**(list legislators with name, address, phone and e-mail)**

It is rare that we make such an urgent request of our employees. That tells you just how critical this issue is. Please get involved – for your patients, for our **(hospital/health system)**, for the health of your own family, and yourself. I hope that **(your institution)** will lead the state in employee participation in this campaign.

Thank you for your involvement and, as always, for your dedication to our mission.

Most sincerely,

**(CEO signature)**