



# MOSAIC<sup>SM</sup>

Opening Doors to Extraordinary Lives

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Letter to the editor:

## Protect Programs That Work and the People They Help

Many of us have had a difficult time understanding the development of President Obama's plans to provide federal aid to the states to slow the loss of jobs, improve our infrastructure and stave off cuts to federal programs at the state level. As this package develops, we must protect those elements of federal programs that serve our communities well, even as we work toward a comprehensive reform that includes a forum for all stakeholders. As CEO of Mosaic, a faith-based nonprofit organization supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities in Nebraska, I ask you to join me and urge our policy makers that they not forget the importance of Medicaid and its many facets that do work. One such area is the crucial support Medicaid provides to people with disabilities.

Leaders like Nebraska Sen. Ben Nelson are working hard to ensure that the emergency allocation of Medicaid within the stimulus package is consistent with the needs of Nebraska families who have children or adults with disabilities. Sen. Nelson has been a strong advocate for individuals with disabilities and has often noted his concern that the cumbersome and lengthy legislative process sometimes creates unintended negative consequences for the very individuals a federal program such as Medicaid intends to support.

I urge all Nebraskans to take the time to engage their elected officials. The Senate vote is Friday and the House and Senate Bill goes to conference next week. This is happening quickly and if we remain silent, we will miss the opportunity to protect the funding for critical services for people with disabilities. Working together with our leaders, we can ensure that the end product is not less than, different from, or contrary to the needs of your family, your friends, and your community.

Linda Timmons, CEO of Mosaic