



# DRA Medicaid Citizenship Documentation Requirement Fact Sheet

## **BACKGROUND**

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 mandates that all citizens applying for and enrolled in Medicaid provide evidence of citizenship in order to receive coverage. Prior to this mandate persons could self-attest citizenship now applicants must provide documentation in the form of a passport, license, or birth certificate. This was created as a solution to a problem of undocumented immigrants falsely declaring citizenship to receive benefits; however there is no evidence to suggest that such a problem exists. This new requirement places a great burden on the 51 million citizens currently enrolled, the 10 million of low-income citizens that apply annually, as well as on state agencies in charge of verifying documentation.

## **PROBLEM**

- **Several states have noted a marked decline in Medicaid enrollment:**
  - Citizens are being denied coverage and benefits are being terminated because applicants are unable to present the necessary documentation.
  - There are significant delays in determining eligibility or renewal of coverage because of the time needed to secure documentation.
  - Early evidence attributes this decline to **citizens** losing coverage and NOT to undocumented immigrants withdrawing from the program.
  - Illinois recently implemented the requirement affecting nearly 1.8 million persons currently enrolled.
  
- **Administrative costs are drastically increasing:**
  - State agencies in charge of verifying documentation are reporting considerable increases in administrative costs
  - The projected increase in administrative costs to implement this requirement in Illinois is between \$16 and \$19 million.

## **SOLUTION**

- The DRA citizenship documentation requirement should be reversed so that millions of citizens do not lose health care coverage.