



National Association of Government Employees

AFFILIATED WITH THE SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

July 16, 2009

Thomas Shields, Chair
Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission
P.O. Box 8747
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Commissioner Shields:

Beginning August 1, 2009, state employees participating in the Group Insurance Commission plan will see their health insurance premium costs increase by as much as \$1,000-plus per year. This unexpected premium increase, enacted by the legislature, will force many to make painful cuts in their own spending on essential items and in the spending of their families.

With the perfect storm of rising health care costs and significantly diminished take-home pay, many employees may have no choice but to change the health plan they have been accustomed to using for years. Unfortunately, because the GIC's open enrollment period occurs each April, employees who can't afford their current plan are stuck with it for an entire fiscal year.

For that reason, NAGE is urging the commission to re-open immediately the open enrollment period to allow employees to make decisions appropriate to their family situation, given the unexpected premium increase. It is unfair to expect employees to make decisions in April when information they needed to make those decisions didn't come out until June.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

David J. Holway
National President

cc: Richard Waring, Vice Chair
Harris Berman, MD

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