October 23, 2026

BJC HealthCare
Aetna Inc.
Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS)

RE: Retired State Employees' Healthcare Coverage and Contract Negotiations

Dear Aetna Inc., BJC HealthCare, and Illinois CMS:

We, the undersigned members of the Illinois General Assembly, are writing to express our serious concerns regarding the potential disruption of healthcare coverage for retired state employees who rely on BJC HealthCare hospitals, physicians, and providers throughout our region. Our offices have received numerous calls from our constituents who have been notified that their current coverage may no longer provide access to their providers beginning January 1, 2027.

The loss of access to these trusted healthcare providers would have significant consequences for affected retirees and their families. These individuals dedicated years of service to the State of Illinois and deserve continuity of care and certainty regarding their healthcare coverage.

Furthermore, the availability of alternative healthcare providers throughout our region is limited. We are concerned that the existing provider network will be unable to adequately accommodate the thousands of retirees who could be affected by this dispute. The consequences of failing to reach an agreement extend beyond a contractual disagreement and threaten access to essential healthcare services for our constituents.

Accordingly, we are insisting that contract negotiations resume immediately and continue on a daily basis with the objective of reaching an agreement that preserves retirees' access to BJC HealthCare facilities and providers.

Should an agreement not be reached by November 6th, we request that representatives of all parties meet with the undersigned legislators to provide a comprehensive briefing on the status of negotiations, the outstanding issues preventing an agreement, and the steps each party is prepared to take to achieve a resolution.

We further request that each party provide a prompt response outlining its current position and the actions being taken to bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion.

Central Management Services (CMS) also has an important role in ensuring that retired state employees have access to health insurance coverage that includes appropriate healthcare providers in their region. We request a detailed explanation of the steps that CMS has taken to

facilitate negotiations and the contingency plans under consideration to protect our affected constituents should an agreement not be reached before the anticipated deadline.

Our constituents deserve timely answers and a clear path forward. We expect all parties to engage constructively and make every reasonable effort to resolve this matter before retirees face a disruption in their healthcare coverage.

We appreciate your immediate attention to this matter and look forward to reviewing your responses regarding the status of negotiations and the actions being taken to reach an agreement.

Sincerely,

Senator Erica Harriss, 56th, Senator Jil Tracy, 50th, Senator Jason Plummer, 55th, Representative Charlie Meier, 109th, Representative Amy Elik, 111th, Senator Terri Bryant, 58th, Senator Paul Jacobs, 59th, Representative Kevin Schmidt, 114th Representative CD Davidsmeyer, 100th, Representative Wayne Rosenthal, 108th, Representative Patrick Windhorst, 117th, Representative Dave Severin, 116th, Representative David Friess, 115th, Representative Scott Doody, 118th

Source: https://www.firstalert4.com/2026/11/06/bjc-health-aetna-give-illinois-retirees-1-year-transition-period-change-coverage/

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