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# UCOWF Statement on the State of Ohio’s Review of its Federally Funded Benefits

*\* **10%** on Medicaid CANNOT be verified as eligible \**

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**WASHINGTON, DC** – Last year, the Ohio General Assembly took interest in the outsized growth and spending in its Medicaid program, resulting in a legislatively mandated audit – spearheaded by State Rep. Mike Dovilla. Concurrently but independent of that effort, State Auditor Faber initiated his own SAVE audit to determine whether state agencies responsible for distributing public funds were complying with eligibility requirements, i.e. recipient citizenship and immigration. This SAVE audit was delivered late last week, and the findings were stunning.

The Auditor’s sample found a state Medicaid error rate of 10%. Auditor Faber called on the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) to immediately review 111,000 Medicaid beneficiaries who had ‘significant’ identification errors ranging from missing or incomplete Social Security numbers to out-of-state addresses, etc. Further, assuming national average Medicaid per beneficiary data, this potentially amounts to a more than \$1.1 billion annual loss to the State and Federal government(s) after adjudication.

“Taxpayers owe a debt of gratitude to Auditor Faber, Rep. Dovilla and the Ohio General Assembly for doing what no other state has done – illustrate in graphic detail the depth and breadth of beneficiary enrollment fraud,” explained Keith Miskie, President of the United Council on Welfare Fraud (UCOWF).

“While no one likes finding this level of problem in any program, it is imperative that this model is replicated nationwide. Families around the country are struggling to make ends meet, and our leaders – state and federal - have to understand that you cannot address affordability without first addressing the fraud in our public benefits. No American who needs these benefits should ever doubt that their communities are there for them. But equally as important, no one who isn’t eligible should ever think that they can just skate by on the backs of taxpayers and the truly eligible.”

Concluding, Miskie added, “UCOWF has long been a proponent of clear and explicit guidance from the federal government to its state partners on how to address beneficiary enrollment fraud. Auditor Faber and his team are to be commended, and hopefully, his leadership will help encourage the same in his counterparts.”

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Editor’s Note: A copy of the Auditor’s report is attached, as well as a link to the office’s press release - <https://ohioauditor.gov/news/pressreleases/Details/7926>.

Additionally, the following is a link to Rep. Dovilla’s release - <https://ohiohouse.gov/members/michael-d-dovilla/news/rep-dovilla-responds-to-auditors-findings-on-medicaid-eligibility-verification-147718>.

UCOWF is the only national professional organization solely dedicated to the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution, and recovery of fraud in public assistance programs. Our members are the boots on the ground in states, counties, territories, and federal agencies.

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