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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 1, 2008
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ANTHEM BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OPTS OUT OF CONTRACT

Carson City—Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director Mike Willden and Division of Health Care Financing and Policy (DHCFP) Administrator Charles Duarte announced today that Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield has notified the State of its intent to terminate services to Nevada Medicaid managed care customers as of December 31, 2008.

In a letter sent to DHCFP on June 30, 2008, the company stated it was exercising its rights under the Contract for State Services of Independent Contractor to terminate its contract within 180 days of notifying the State.

Duarte said, "We are mandated by federal law to have two managed care plans under contract to provide consumers with a choice. Two plans are necessary to ensure we can operate a mandatory Medicaid managed care program in Clark and Washoe counties. We are already working to make sure this requirement is met."

Duarte added that consumers will not be impacted by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield's action, but the State could face financial instability if we do not meet the federal requirements for this important program.

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield presently provides services to nearly 50,000 people in Clark and Washoe counties. Managed care plans are not currently available in Nevada's rural counties.

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