Initiatives have been proposed that would reduce public funding provided to public and not-for-profit hospitals, including safety net hospitals. A current bill proposed in the Florida legislature would significantly reduce Medicaid payments to hospitals. Such efforts are also being pursued by legislators in other states to address growing Medicaid costs.

In his 2012 budget proposal, Florida’s Governor Rick Scott proposed reducing Florida Medicaid by $2.1 billion. Florida’s current Medicaid budget is $20 billion. The intent was to use the Medicaid cuts to better fund education. The Governor also proposed leveling Medicaid payment amounts paid to hospitals, which likely would reduce the more generous payments paid to safety net hospitals. The Governor’s proposed limiting hospital stays and emergency room visits for Medicaid patients. Medicaid patients are high utilizers of emergency department visits, which is attributed to a shortage of primary care doctors who will take Medicaid patients.

The percent of the population covered by Medicaid is increasing while state revenues are not, which is a genuine financial dilemma. In Florida, 13% of the population is covered by Medicaid.

Further, some regions in Florida have a local taxing district to generate tax revenue to support local hospitals that serve low income populations. In 2011, Governor Rick Scott issued an Executive Order to form a Commission that would assess hospital taxing districts and the report was completed in December 2011.

Begin by reviewing Governor Scott’s Executive Order and the recommendations of the report (it is not necessary to read the entire report). If interested, you can also conduct a search on “Florida Medicaid cuts 2012” to locate further information on the proposed Medicaid cuts.

Instructions
1. After viewing the lecture, reading the Executive Order and summary of recommendations from the report, and considering proposed Medicaid cuts, choose an issue presented. Students should not choose an issue if another student in your group has already posted on it.

2. In your first post, provide a paragraph that explains the issue selected from the perspective of those advocating for it. It is recognized that students do not necessarily agree with the perspective selected. Label your post with the issue selected (1.5 points).

3. In a second post, respond to another student’s first post, providing a) further facts that support the perspective, b) an alternative solution to address the issue, or c) considerations that were not taken into account by the perspective, and provide a rationale (1.5 points).