



STATEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY NETWORK IN OPPOSITION TO THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

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WASHINGTON – April 27, 2017 – The **Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)**, the **National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)**, and **National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)**, three national Developmental Disabilities (DD) Network partners advocating for and with the 57 million people with disabilities in our country, strongly oppose the American Health Care Act (AHCA) being considered in the House of Representatives.

The American Health Care Act repeals major provisions of the ACA, and many of its critical protections. It cuts \$880 billion out of the Medicaid program. The restructuring and cuts to Medicaid are particularly devastating to people with disabilities. Under the cap and cut proposal, the federal government would no longer share in the costs of providing health care services and community services beyond the capped amount. It weakens Medicaid by ending the Medicaid expansion earlier, offering Medicaid block grants to states, and promoting work requirements. If these changes are made, many people with disabilities will lose the short-term, or long-term care that they need to go to school, go to work or live at home.

The latest amendment is particularly harmful to people with pre-existing health conditions. The bill would allow states to seek waivers that would result in higher premiums charged to people with pre-existing conditions, including people with disabilities. The new amendment also would allow states to seek waivers from the ACA requirement to provide essential health benefits, including crucial services for people with disabilities such as mental health and substance use disorder services, prescription drugs, rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices, preventative and wellness services and chronic disease management, and pediatric services. The cumulative effect of these changes would make it nearly impossible for people with pre-existing conditions, including people with disabilities, to meet their basic health care service needs.

Significant changes to the ACA must not occur without a comprehensive replacement that maintains or provides comprehensive, affordable, quality, non-discriminatory coverage and benefits to all people with disabilities.

We look forward to working with all Members of Congress to consider improvements to the ACA and Medicaid, but will oppose amendments that weaken the current protections and coverage provided under current law.

AUCD represents over 130 university-based disability centers and programs conducting research, education, and innovative programming on disability issues across the life course. Our work focuses on ensuring equality of opportunity, inclusion, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities and their families. AUCD has member programs in every state and territory and works in over 40 countries worldwide.

NDRN is the non-profit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) and Client Assistance Program (CAP) systems for individuals with disabilities. The P&A and CAP systems were established by the United States Congress to protect the rights of people with disabilities and their families through legal support, advocacy, referral, and education in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories. Collectively, the P&A and CAP Network is the largest provider of legally based advocacy services to people with disabilities in the United States.

NACDD is the national association for the 56 Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils) across the United States and its territories. The DD Councils receive federal funding to support programs that promote self-determination, integration and inclusion for all people in the United States with developmental disabilities.