

January 6, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell and Speaker Ryan:

We, the undersigned organizations, would like to provide our view on the importance of the Medicaid program for vulnerable populations as Congress considers potential changes to the Affordable Care Act this month.

Our organizations work to improve the health of underserved communities and to develop and support those clinicians who serve them. We represent clinicians, patients, staff, and administrators, as well as clinics, health departments, hospitals, and national, regional, and state primary care organizations, and professional societies. Together, we work on the front line in delivering healthcare to America's underserved and vulnerable communities; communities where individuals typically have little or no other access to healthcare services. These individuals, millions of whom are insured through the Medicaid program today, often lack access to pharmaceuticals, behavioral health, oral health care, and other necessary health services.

We are very concerned that among the options being considered by congressional leaders is a repeal of the Medicaid expansion included in the Affordable Care Act — with a commitment to passing a replacement of the law at a later date. We believe a decision to repeal the Medicaid expansion before the enactment of a thoughtful, viable, and permanent replacement would lead to a significant disruption for many Americans, safety net providers and other stakeholders within the health system.

As the foundation of the healthcare safety net, Medicaid currently covers more than 70 million people in the United States. Including Medicaid covered individuals, approximately 90% of all people in the United States have healthcare coverage today — the highest level in history. We urge you to ensure that any change in current law enables this level of coverage to continue, or better yet, to rise in the future. Study after study has concluded that insurance status matters when it comes to access to care, and we see that in practice every day. But we need that commitment before repealing a significant part of a program that is working for millions today. Individuals enrolled in Medicaid are some of our most vulnerable individuals and families, and without a replacement plan will most likely lose insurance altogether.

We have heard loud and clear your commitment to repeal the ACA, but please remember that it has been the law of the land for almost seven years. As a result, any legislative and administrative change made will be difficult to implement quickly at the state and local level without major disruptions to the healthcare delivery system. States already constrained by tight budgets could be left with no choice but to eliminate Medicaid coverage for thousands of people without the proper time to plan for sustainable alternative solutions.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to find innovative ways to improve the quality, financing, and delivery of care in our country. However, we would ask that Congress consult with all key stakeholders, including patients, families, states, counties, providers, and health plans throughout the process in order to take the time needed to develop and enact realistic and effective policies to ensure continuous coverage and access to affordable care. Those insured through the Medicaid program are our neighbors, families and friends, and it is too important to do otherwise.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sincerely,

Association of Clinicians for the Underserved  
Action Wellness  
ADAP Advocacy Association  
AIDS Action Baltimore  
Alamosa County Public Health Department  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Muslim Health Professionals  
American School Health Association  
APLA Health  
Arizona State Association of Physician Assistants  
Association for Community Affiliated Plans  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations  
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Briar Cliff University  
California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals  
California Primary Care Association  
CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates  
Center for New Beginnings  
Cincinnati Health Network  
Clay County Medical Center  
Coles County Health Department  
Community Access National Network  
Community Health Centers of Burlington  
Community Healthcare Center  
CommunityHealth  
Council for Exceptional Children-Division for Research  
Crescent Community Health Center  
Crook County Health Department  
Cuyahoga County Board of Health  
Denise Olin, Inc. Psy.D.  
Disability Law Center of Alaska  
Disability Law Colorado  
Disability Rights California  
Disability Rights Maryland  
Disability Rights New Jersey  
Disability Rights North Carolina  
Disability Rights Oregon  
Disability Rights Tennessee  
Disability Rights Vermont  
East Texas Community Health Services, Inc.  
Eating Disorders Coalition  
Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta  
Esperanza Health Center

Family Health Centers, Inc. of Louisville  
Family Practice & Counseling Network  
Family Voices Indiana  
Family Voices NJ  
Family Voices of North Dakota  
Family Voices of Tennessee  
Frontier Health  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality  
Good Samaritan Health & Wellness Center  
Great Salt Plains Health Center, Inc.  
Guided Pathways Support for Youth & Families  
HealthNet (OH)  
HIV Medicine Association  
Holland Free Health Clinic  
Idaho Parents Unlimited  
Illinois Association for Behavioral Health  
Illinois Primary Health Care Association  
Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health  
Indiana Primary Health Care Association  
Iowa Primary Care Association, Inc.  
J. Addoh Underserved, LLC  
Jamaica Family Practice and Osteopathic Medicine  
Jefferson County Public Health  
JL Family Services  
KYANNA Black Nurses Association of Louisville, KY  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
Logan County Health District  
M&M Behavioral Health Consultants  
Maryland United for Peace and Justice  
Meridian Psychological LLC  
Metro Community Provider Network  
Michigan Family Voices  
Montana Public Health Association  
Mountain Family Health Centers  
National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Physicians Alliance  
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.  
New York State Association of County Health Officials  
NH Family Voices  
North Side Christian Health Center  
Northwest Human Services  
Ohio Public Health Association  
PAVE  
Positive Women's Network, Michigan Regional Chapter  
Presidio County Health Services  
Project Inform  
Reproductive Health Access Project  
Rhode Island Parent Information Network

RiverStone Health  
Roaring Fork Schools  
Rural Health IT Corporation  
Salud Family Health Centers  
School-Based Health Alliance  
Shasta Community Health Center  
Siouxland Community Health Center  
SouthEast Lancaster Health Services  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network of New Jersey  
SynerGenius Telepresence  
Tennessee Disability Coalition  
The AIDS Institute  
The Holland Free Health Clinic  
The Institute for Family Health  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation  
The National Council for Behavioral Health  
Unity Health Care, Inc.  
Venice Family Clinic  
Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights  
Vermont Family Network  
Virginia Community Healthcare Association  
Westside Family Healthcare  
Youngstown City Health District

cc:

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515