

March 3, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden,
Chair
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady,
Chair
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone,
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal,
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Walden and Brady, Ranking Members Pallone and Neal:

The undersigned groups hold a diverse range of views concerning health care policy; however, we are in full agreement that sweeping legislative changes affecting Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act and Medicare require proper and thorough deliberations, under regular order with legislative hearings well in advance of a markup.

We are deeply concerned that the House Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce Committees, with jurisdiction over federal health care programs that cover 100 million Americans and account for nearly 18% of our nation's economy, might vote on complex and far-reaching legislation without a single public hearing in this Congress on the bill. We are distressed that the Committees might vote within only 36 hours of the unveiling of the legislation. We are strongly concerned that the Committee might vote on such legislation without testimony from non-partisan experts, for example from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), or the Government Accountability Office (GAO). It is particularly important that the scoring analysis of the proposal's federal impact from CBO be available and well understood before any Committee votes are taken.

Based upon the public blueprint issued by House leadership, we understand that the legislation to be considered would fundamentally restructure Medicaid and shift the risk of increased health costs in the future to states and families. Medicaid spending has a positive economic effect for states and the federal funds magnify this impact. Medicaid funds support tens of thousands of health care providers and their staff. The multiplier effect of this spending boosts the overall economy in states and is especially important for rural providers and communities. Medicaid covers more than 70 million individuals and some 66% of Americans say that Medicaid has covered them, a family member, or a friend at some point.

The complex and far ranging economic changes to Medicaid alone warrant transparency and adequate legislative hearings but it is our understanding that the Committees are also likely

to consider sweeping changes to the individual and small group health insurance markets, Medicare, tax policies, insurance coverage requirements and affordability.

Given the significant impact that the likely legislative proposals will have on the lives of tens of millions of families it is essential that not only members of Congress and Governors be able to accurately assess the full effect of these proposals, but that the American public must be able to understand the implications as well. Hearings would offer Representatives and the public the opportunity to examine, question and weigh the impact and tradeoffs involved in the proposed changes for their respective constituents and communities. These proposals will directly affect the health and economic security of millions of Americans, hospitals and other providers, state and local services and economies, and our nation's ability to address the current opioid crisis and other potential future public health crises. Hearings are needed to consider the scope and intensity of these impacts.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee and Ways and Means Committee both have a longstanding history of deliberating health care policy proposals through transparent processes, including public hearings, open comment periods on discussion drafts, multi-stakeholder meetings and more. Changes that would alter the very foundation of Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act should be treated no differently. We urge you to conduct similar hearings and solicit broad input for any reconciliation proposals that will affect the health and well-being of American families.

ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+)

ADAPT

The Advocacy Institute

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families

Alliance for Retired Americans

American Art Therapy Association

American Association on Health and Disability

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Federation of Teachers

American Nurses Association

American Psychological Association

American Public Health Association

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

The Arc

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare

Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP)

Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Brain Injury Association of America
Caring Across Generations
Center for American Progress
Center for Community Change Action
Center for HIV Law & Policy
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Center for Public Representation
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Dental Health Project
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Access National Network (CANN)
Community Catalyst
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Doctors for America
Eating Disorders Coalition
Family Voices
Families USA
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
Health and Disability Advocates
HIV Medicine Association
Human Rights Campaign
Justice in Aging
Lambda Legal
Latino Commission on AIDS and Hispanic Health Network
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Leading Age
Lutheran Services in America
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
Medicare Rights Center
Mental Health America
MomsRising
MoveOn.org
NAACP
NAMI
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National AIDS Housing Coalition
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality

National Coalition for Maternal Mental-Health (NCMMH)
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Consumers League
National Council of Jewish Women
National Disability Rights Network
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Health Law Program
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National PACE Association
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Physicians Alliance
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable
National Women's Health Network
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NCOA
Paralyzed Veterans of America
People's Action
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Public Citizen
Public Health Institute
SEIU
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
Social Security Works
Society for Public Health Education
United Cerebral Palsy
United Church of Christ, Justice & Witness Ministries
United Methodist Church - Church and Society
United States Conference of Mayors
Vietnam Veterans of America
Voices for Progress
Young Invincibles

cc: The Honorable Speaker Paul Ryan
The Honorable Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Minority Leader Charles Schumer
The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee