

Contacts:

Bob Kafka, ADAPT, Bob.Adapt@sbcglobal.net, 512.431.4085

Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers – Texas, wfrancis@naswtx.org, 512.474.1454

Oliver Bernstein, Center for Public Policy Priorities, Bernstein@CPPP.org, 512.823.2875

Coalition of Health and Human Services Advocates Calls for Protecting Health Care for Texans

Austin, TX-- Today the Coalition of Health and Human Services Advocates held a press conference to highlight threats to Texans needing health and human services – including Texans with disabilities – from the possible repeal of the Affordable Care Act and cuts to Medicaid.

Representatives involved in the Coalition came together and communicated this to our federal and state leaders: repealing the ACA, Blocking Granting or putting caps on Medicaid will harm Texans who most need and use health and human services.

“I had to leave the Texas I love because of being denied insurance for pre-existing conditions,” said Deborah Rosales-Elkins, Peer Policy Fellow from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas. “My husband had worked for the state for years and they refused to cover me. This is wrong!”

Given an ACA repeal, at least 4.5 million Texans under 65 (about 27 percent of the total) have conditions that would have resulted in a denial of coverage before the ACA. Without the ACA and without the certainty of coverage under Medicaid, these Texans face the risk of losing health care coverage entirely.

“Flexibility in Medicaid programs without funding could result in many low income people with disabilities and seniors losing critical in home community attendant services that allows people to age in place,” said Bob Kafka Organizer for ADAPT of Texas.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates recent Republican block grant proposals could cut Medicaid spending by as much as a quarter over the next decade. “It is estimated Texas could lose \$4.8 billion in federal funds by the second year of the US House’s block grant proposal adopted in 2016. The impact would be huge,” said Anne Dunkelberg, Associate Director of the Center for Public Policy Priorities. For comparison, the recent Texas Medicaid therapy cuts that have caused so much harm were “only” \$350 million in combined state and federal dollars.”

Without proper health care funding, states would be forced to make deep cuts and limit innovation, putting low income beneficiaries (families, children, people with disabilities and seniors) at the highest risk of having increased health issues and lose of community integration services.

Background:

The Coalition of Health and Human Services Advocates is comprised of concerned health care advocates and policy oriented organizations. These include: ADAPT of Texas, Center for Public Policy Priorities, Children’s Defense Fund, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Easter Seals, National Association of Social Workers, Personal Attendant Coalition of Texas, REV UP Texas, and Texas Centers for Independent Living

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