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ANCOR Statement on Passage of AHCA in U.S. House of Representatives

May 5, 2017 – Yesterday the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA) by a slim margin with a vote of 217 in favor and 213 against. ANCOR is extremely saddened by this vote, not only because of the highly dangerous changes the bill makes to insurance coverage for people with disabilities. We are profoundly disappointed that the provisions of the bill that fundamentally restructure and cut the Medicaid program – the first time since the inception of the program – were such a minor focus for Congressional members in the “People’s House” that voted for it. In fact, only a few minutes of floor time during the debate mentioned these monumental changes.

The version of the AHCA that passed yesterday will not only pull back on protections and provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), but it will move Medicaid to a per capita cap program, reduce federal money to states to provide for the program and have direct impact on services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Yes, the bill did include changes that would on paper provide fewer cuts to Medicaid’s aging and disabled programs. However, there is no assurance at all of how the cuts and limits to federal funding would be allocated at the state level. This is exactly why greater consideration and analysis of Medicaid provisions needed to be included in the House’s AHCA deliberations.

Now, more than ever Republicans, Democrats, Independents, the media and the public need the resources and expertise that ANCOR and our members can provide. *We must be a part of these deliberations to share the reality of how policy translates to practice and the challenges and rewards of the work we do.* Now that the AHCA has passed the House, we are actively working with Senators on both sides of the aisle to change the narrative of the story we saw play out yesterday.

“Where there is danger we will caution and protect;” said ANCOR CEO Barbara Merrill, “where there is opportunity we will explore and build. ANCOR is nonpartisan and we are driven by one policy – to fortify services for people with disabilities. That has been our purpose for half a century and it will be our driving force as we enter this important stage in the Senate.”

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The American Network of Community Options and Resources is a national trade association representing more than 1,200 private providers of community living and employment supports and services to more than 800,000 individuals with disabilities with a workforce that’s over half a million strong. ANCOR advocates for the crucial role private providers play in enhancing and supporting the lives of people with disabilities and their families.