

Statement from ANCOR CEO Barbara Merrill on the Defeat of the Health Care Freedom Act

July 28, 2017 – In the early hours of the morning, the vote to pass the Health Care Freedom Act of 2017 in the U.S. Senate failed.

ANCOR is profoundly relieved that Medicaid, the lifeline for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and the services they rely on, has, for the moment, been spared from devastating cuts and caps.

We are indebted to our members who answered every call to action, and to our many colleagues who spent days and nights relentlessly advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. Thank you.

Now that the proverbial national lightbulb is finally going on with respect to what Medicaid is and what it does, it's our collective responsibility to establish and deepen that understanding on both sides of the aisle, with every member of Congress.

ANCOR recognizes Medicaid is not perfect. But let's improve it together in an inclusive fashion with open public hearings. We know we can do better, and today the U.S. Senate signaled that they agree.

ANCOR is committed to being a part of deliberations that share the realities of how policy translates to practice. Working with Congressional members on both sides of the aisle, ANCOR is today encouraged that we can deliver on a healthcare plan that upholds the promise and vision of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

We are buoyed by today's U.S. Senate vote, and see this as an opportunity to revisit these policy decisions in an inclusive way that puts people first. ANCOR is driven by the sole mission of strengthening the ability of community providers to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to fully participate in their communities. We are eager to continue working alongside the Administration and Congress to deliver on this mission.

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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.

Through its National Advocacy Campaign, ANCOR seeks to obtain the resources to recruit, train and retain a sustainable direct support workforce. ANCOR provides organization, professional, leadership development and networking opportunities and services and is continually working toward partnerships and collaborations that support our mission, which is to advance the ability of our members in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to fully participate in their communities. www.ancor.org.