



May 4th, 2017

American Health Care Act Passes House by Vote of 217-213



Our mission is to advance social and policy change so that people with developmental disabilities, their families and communities may live, work, play and learn together. OCDD issues this statement of serious concern with the vote on the American Health Care Act (AHCA) today that passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 217-213.



OCDD's Statement on AHCA

The passage of the AHCA shows a disregard for ensuring that people with disabilities have access to comprehensive, affordable, quality, non-discriminatory coverage and benefits in healthcare. Furthermore, it

decimates the Medicaid program by cutting the program by \$880 billion dollars. The restructuring and cuts to the Medicaid program are devastating to people with disabilities. Under the cap and cut proposal, the federal government will no longer share in the costs of providing health care services and community services beyond the capped amount. In addition, it ends the Medicaid expansion earlier, and offers Medicaid block grants to states.

The amendments added to pass the AHCA are particularly harmful to people with pre-existing health conditions. The AHCA allows states to seek waivers that would result in higher premiums charged to people with pre-existing conditions, including people with disabilities. States can seek waivers from the ACA requirement to provide essential health benefits, including crucial services for people with disabilities such as mental health and substance use disorder services, prescription drugs, rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices, preventative and wellness services and chronic disease management, and pediatric services. By allowing states to receive additional funds from an 8 billion dollar fund for high-risk pools is not sufficient to ensuring people with pre-existing conditions have adequate coverage. High risk pools have been shown by a range of experts to not be effective to addressing the needs of this population.

The cumulative effect of passage of the AHCA makes it nearly impossible for people with pre-existing conditions, including people with disabilities, to meet their basic health care service needs. With passage of this legislation, many people with disabilities will lose the short-term, or long-term care that they need to go to school, go to work or live at home.

The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities will continue to work to ensure that every person with a disability has comprehensive, affordable, quality, non-discriminatory coverage and benefits for their healthcare and long-term supports to work and live in the community. We look forward to working with the Senate as the process moves forward to consider how to improve healthcare and Medicaid programs.

Sincerely,

Jaime Daignault & Noelle Sisk
OCDD Executive Director and Chair

