**Alert on Affordable Care Act**

We need your help! There are serious threats facing the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in early January as soon as Congress returns on January 3rd. Please call your Senators and Representatives to educate them about why the ACA an essential program for people with I/DD and their families.

Every call matters, so please reach out and share how the ACA is an important for you, a family member, or friend. Repeal of the ACA without simultaneous enactment of a replacement plan that maintains or improves existing coverage and access is unacceptable!  
  
**Background**

Enactment of the ACA was one of the most significant laws for people with disabilities since the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. It brings about comprehensive reforms that benefit people with disabilities by prohibiting discrimination based on health status and improving access to care. There are countless other provisions in the ACA that are important to people with disabilities. The ACA has unquestionably improved access to care for people with disabilities to help them live healthy, independent lives in the community that also allows them to be employed and taxpayers. To eliminate the ACA, or to eliminate the ACA without simultaneously replacing it with a functionally equivalent alternative, jeopardizes this progress and puts people with disabilities at ongoing access to comprehensive, affordable coverage at risk.

**Take Action**

Sample message

I am (FILL IN COUNCIL ROLE OR OTHER CONNECTION) and I urge you to ensure that the ACA is not repealed and that any repeal of the ACA is replaced with a plan that maintains or improves existing coverage and access. Americans with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities rely on their health coverage to maintain their independence and meet their medical needs.

The ACA allowed states to extend their Medicaid programs to low income adults. This change has provided coverage to millions of people, including individuals with I/DD and other disabilities and chronic health conditions who were not otherwise eligible for Medicaid. The ACA also provided federal money to support Medicaid expansion. The additional federal contribution to expanding Medicaid has helped more people access health care without harming the existing programs that provide supports and services to people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

Finally, the ACA included strong nondiscrimination provisions and health insurance reforms such as preventing insurers from charging people with disabilities and health conditions significantly more for health insurance coverage and eliminating annual and lifetime caps on health coverage. Several provisions of the ACA were designed to assist states to rebalance their long term supports systems and invest in the community instead of costly and outdated institutions. These include the Community First Choice Option (CFC) and the State Plan Home and Community-Based Services Option (also known as Sections 1915(k) and 1915(i).

If you support repeal of the ACA, you support cutting an essential progam for people with disabilities in our state. I urge you ensure the ACA is not repealed without ensuring that the replacement legislation addresses these vital concerns and maintains or improves access to comprehensive and affordable health care.