

SUBJECT: ACT to Save Your Family Member's Services

For so many years, families of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities were certain that "their" services (job support, community support, day programming, residential support, with additional medical, behavioral, therapeutic care, and equipment), would never be in jeopardy. But that's a dangerous belief, because as many of you already know, OPWDD funding comes almost entirely from Medicaid, half of which is funded by the federal government.

The planned Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) repeal and House-proposed replacement bill (the American Health Care Act (will significantly CHANGE and REDUCE the services your family member relies on to live a meaningful and healthy life.

If the repeal and replacement succeeds, our nation will lose \$880 Billion in health care and Medicaid will no longer be an entitlement. Currently, the federal government sets eligibility requirements for Medicaid (poverty, disability, age) and states must cover all of those people. In return, states are guaranteed federal matching funds with no pre-determined limit.

To replace the current Medicaid system, the House is proposing a funding mechanism called Per Capita Caps. In this plan, federal Medicaid will pay the state a fixed amount for each person enrolled in Medicaid. They are trying to sell this as a Beneficiary Allotment, framing it as a gift, and not the extreme limitation it is. Because the goal of the bill is to reduce federal spending, the State's reimbursement will be set to increase more slowly than it would under current law.

Home and Community-Based Medicaid waived long term care services (including the waiver that funds self-directed services) will join the restricted pot of dollars, and all citizens who receive services through Medicaid-children, people with very low income, the elderly, those with behavioral health needs, and people with intellectual/developmental disabilities- will have to compete for an ever smaller bucket of money. All will lose-and we may never regain the current level of funding.

New York Self-Determination Coalition is a member of Medicaid Matters New York ([www.medicaidmattersny.org](http://www.medicaidmattersny.org)), a coalition of more than 140 organizations focused on consumer interests in Medicaid (advocacy, protection of rights, policy). Through much reading and discussion, we have become convinced that all groups who use Medicaid must work together to protect Medicaid-funded health care and access to services.

What can you do?

You can make a difference! Lawmakers need to hear your stories. How have Medicaid-funded services changed your family member's life?

### **Phone your members of Congress**

Call today, and every day for the next few weeks (or for as long as it takes, they definitely keep track of call numbers). Tell them that you're a constituent, and that they should preserve Medicaid funding by voting against the American Health Care Act.

Find phone numbers at: <http://fifthfreedom.org/findreps/>

### **Write your story**

Write about your child, your child's day to day life, the triumphs made possible by long term care and the challenges that make care a necessity.

Write about the Medicaid-funded direct support workers who fear they will lose their jobs, and then their health care.

Send your story to your Senators, your member of the House of Representatives, then send it to your local newspaper, your religious leaders, and post it on Facebook.

Find email addresses at: <http://fifthfreedom.org/findreps/>

Send us a copy of your story-We'll post it on our website!

**Attend** Town Meetings held by your member of Congress.

**Visit** your Senators during the week of April 8<sup>th</sup> recess, when they are back in their district/local offices and tell them your stories.

**Want more information? Check in** at Health Care for all New York <http://hcfany.org>

**Click Here to read our Parent Stories!** <http://www.nyselfd.org/parent-stories.html>

**More questions? Email us at** [nyselfd@gmail.com](mailto:nyselfd@gmail.com)

Thanks for your efforts!