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CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY VOICES OPPOSITION TO SENATE BETTER CARE RECONCILIATION ACT

BCRA would place significant burden on individuals living with cancer

WASHINGTON – (June 23, 2017) – The Cancer Support Community (CSC), an international nonprofit organization dedicated to serving and advocating for cancer patients and their loved ones, announces its opposition to the Senate Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA). The legislation, made public after weeks of closed-door discussions, retains the most concerning provisions originally introduced in the House of Representative’s American Health Care Act (AHCA).

“The Better Care Reconciliation Act is just as dangerous to patients as the American Health Care Act, passed by the House in May,” said Kim Thiboldeaux, CEO of CSC. “These bills will raise patient costs, reduce coverage, roll back existing consumer and affordability protections, and dismantle the Medicaid program. These measures, if passed into law, would be devastating to America’s families, and CSC cannot support any policy proposals that roll back protections in existing law and raise additional barriers to accessing high-quality, comprehensive, and affordable health care.”

Just like the AHCA, the BCRA will allow states to waive certain requirements, like the ten essential health benefits, which ensure cancer patients have access to prescription medications, emergency services, mental health treatment, and more. The BCRA significantly limits premium subsidies, eliminates the individual and employer mandates, and allows insurers to charge older Americans premiums that are five times more expensive than younger patients will pay. Furthermore, the legislation restructures Medicaid from an entitlement program to per-capita caps or block grants, drastically cutting funding and ultimately harming our most vulnerable patients across the country.

CSC has repeatedly urged Members of Congress to create health care legislation that would contain patient-centered protections for all Americans, including those with pre-existing conditions, older Americans, and those who depend on Medicaid for lifesaving treatments and services. Cancer patients and survivors, in particular, must have access to comprehensive, high-quality, timely, and affordable health care. The AHCA and the BCRA are not the solution.

About the Cancer Support Community

As the largest professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, the Cancer Support Community (CSC) is dedicated to ensuring that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action, and sustained by community. CSC achieves its mission through three areas: direct service delivery, research, and advocacy. The organization includes an international network of Affiliates that offer the highest quality social and emotional support for people impacted by cancer, as well as a community of support available online and over the phone. The Research and Training Institute conducts cutting-edge psychosocial, behavioral, and survivorship research. CSC furthers its focus on patient advocacy through its Cancer Policy Institute, informing public policy in Washington, D.C. and across the nation. In 2016, the CSC network delivered nearly \$45 million in free services to patients and families. For more information, please call the toll-free Cancer Support Helpline at 888-793-9355, or visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org. *So that no one faces cancer alone®*

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