January 25, 2017

AN OPEN LETTER TO CONGRESS FROM THE NATION’S MAYORS

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leaders:

On behalf of United States Conference of Mayors, we urge Congress to take into consideration the effect that the repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) will have on our nation’s cities large and small, urban and rural.

As Mayors, we share a responsibility for the health and well-being of our communities, which includes ensuring access to comprehensive and affordable health care. Millions of Americans have gained insurance under the ACA, and the law has been instrumental in bringing about insurance reforms from which we all benefit. It is imperative that we preserve this progress.

The ACA has improved the lives of many Americans and shouldn’t be tossed out without careful consideration of the effect. Repealing the ACA would deny desperately needed access to care and families; place an undue burden on our local hospitals; and, would rescind safeguards for patients currently suffering from chronic and terminal illnesses.

Moreover, there are important provisions of the ACA which have bipartisan support, are working well, and should be retained including:

- Insuring children up to the age of 26;
- Eliminating lifetime and annual limits;
- Assuring eligibility for insurance coverage even with pre-existing conditions;
- Guaranteeing coverage for pregnancy and breast cancer screenings; and,
- Providing coverage for preventive services at no additional cost.
Further, Mayors support the provisions in the ACA, which have increased mental health and substance use disorder benefits and provided parity. Mayors, also, oppose efforts to convert Medicaid to block grants.

The effects of repealing the ACA will be felt most heavily at the local level. It is our cities and counties that will see increases in indigent care costs for our hospitals, in uninsured rates and uncompensated care costs; and it is our low and moderate income residents who will return to a time of having to choose between health care and everyday living expenses, like groceries.

As Mayors representing millions of citizens, we are united in urging you to build upon, not tear down, the progress that has been made to our healthcare system and to ensure that none of the 20 million newly covered individuals is left without health care coverage.

Sincerely,

Mick Cornett
Mayor of Oklahoma City
President

Mitchell J. Landrieu
Mayor of New Orleans
Vice President

Stephen K. Benjamin
Mayor of Columbia, SC
2nd Vice President

Tom Cochran
CEO & Executive Director

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston
Chair, Children, Health and Human Services Committee

Bill de Blasio
Mayor of New York City
Chair, Cities of Opportunity Task Force

Edwin M. Lee
Mayor of San Francisco

John Giles
Mayor of Mesa