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**Memorandum of Support  
New York Health Act (A.4738/S.4840)**

**The National Association of Social Workers – New York City Chapter (NASW-NYC) is proud to join the many organizations and individuals across New York State in support of the New York Health Act (A.4738/S.4840).**

The New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NYC) is one of the largest chapters of NASW in the country. Founded in 1955, NASW-NYC represents professional social workers who are working throughout the five boroughs, primarily in public and non-profit organizations. Social workers are also in private practice and in other for-profit service related settings. Nationally, NASW is the largest organization representing social workers in the world. We seek to develop and promote professional standards for social work practice along with NASW's widely recognized Code of Ethics. NASW also advocates for strengthening programs on behalf of social work clients and for policies that support social workers in their professional work.

Nothing less than the future health of our country and our state are at stake. The proposed new Obamacare replacement, the American Health Care Act would be disastrous for New York State. According to the Governor of New York, 2.7 million New Yorkers would face substantial loss in their current health coverage (1). Overall, the number of uninsured people under 65 in the US would increase from 26 million to 46 million over four years (2). Many more people would face higher premiums, Furthermore, the Governor estimates that ACHA would cost NY State \$4.6 billion across four years. <sup>1</sup> This would present an unbearable burden for the most vulnerable New Yorkers: the poor, the sick, the elderly, women and those with limited incomes, in addition to disproportionately affecting communities of color. We are deeply concerned that the version of ACHA from the US Senate will not be a significant improvement.

The New York Health Act is the only way to guarantee that all resident New Yorkers have access to the care they need. With this Act, a 2015 economic analysis of the Act states that 98% of New Yorkers are projected to pay less than they do now for health care. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ryan/Collins/Faso Health Care Repeal Would Have Devastating Impact on People of 19th Congressional District, Governor Andrew Cuomo, March 24, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Cost Estimates of H.R. 1628, the American Health Care Act of 2017, Table 4 page 40, Congressional Budget Office, May 24, 2017

The New York Health Act has passed the Assembly in 2015, 2016 and 2017 by a large majority. The NYS Senate is only one Senator away from having a majority behind this bill. Now is the time for the New York State legislature to listen to the people—and the growing movement for this bill—who want a health care system that guarantees access to decent and affordable care as a public good.

The New York Health Act will:

- allow people to access care when they need it, instead of rationing based on ability to pay – a practice which leads to very poor health outcomes;
- guarantee coverage to everyone, provide better benefits, remove financial barriers to health care, and, according to the economic analysis of the bill, **save New Yorkers over \$45 billion annually.**<sup>3</sup>;
- allow New Yorkers to choose the provider or hospital of their choice since provider networks imposed by insurance companies would be eliminated;
- benefit women by guaranteeing access to the same comprehensive coverage currently available through public and private programs, including reproductive health care;
- help New York State deal with epidemics like opioid addiction through prevention, treatment and rehabilitation;
- eliminate the burdensome paperwork and complexity associated with finding insurance coverage, billing and negotiating with insurance companies which constantly try to deny coverage, allowing social workers and other providers to focus on the health of our clients/patients.

For these reasons, the New York City chapter of the National Association of Social Workers fully supports the New York Health Act (A.5062/S.3525) and looks forward to a future with universal health care for New York State.

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<sup>3</sup> Economic Analysis of the New York Health Act by Gerald Friedman, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Economics, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, April 2015