



**For Immediate Release:**  
January 14, 2016

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## **GOVERNOR’S PROPOSED BUDGET INCREASES AFFORDABLE HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE AND HELPS CONSUMERS ACCESS CARE**

**Albany, NY**— Health Care for All New York (HCFANY), a statewide coalition of over 170 consumer advocacy organizations, congratulates Governor Cuomo for an Executive Budget that continues efforts to increase insurance coverage and help consumers work with their health plans to access care. However, HCFANY proposes changes that will close additional coverage gaps and meet growing demand from consumers who need help with their plans.

The Essential Plan, which is being rolled out this month, is expected to provide coverage for hundreds of thousands of low- and moderate-income New Yorkers and save the State more than \$600 million annually. “Every day our consumers express delight and relief at the chance to get affordable, high quality health coverage for \$20 or less a month,” said Elisabeth R. Benjamin, MSPH, JD, Vice President of Health Initiatives at the Community Service Society of New York, “As Governor Cuomo notes, the Essential Plan is a real ‘win-win’ for New York, simultaneously saving money for consumers and easing the State’s budget burden.”

“Make the Road New York (MRNY), along with HCFANY, applauds the Department of Health’s efforts to create the Essential Plan,” said Becca Telzak, Director of Health Programs, MRNY. “However, the state should fund Essential Plan coverage for immigrants who cannot currently participate because of their immigration status. Without this funding, they miss out on a fantastic coverage option and are likely to become or remain uninsured.” Claudia Calhoun, Director of Health Advocacy, New York Immigration Coalition, adds “For example, working young people who have been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or DACA and make too much to be eligible for Medicaid currently have no coverage options. Extending insurance coverage to this small group will strengthen their ability to work, study, and contribute to their communities and New York State’s economy.” HCFANY proposes allocating \$10 million to fund Essential Plan coverage for immigrants currently ineligible because they are categorized as PRUCOLs. These are people who entered the US without documentation, but who are now in contact with immigration authorities and are here to stay.

HCFANY also commends the governor’s support for the Community Health Advocates (CHA) program. Since 2010, CHA has helped nearly 200,000 New Yorkers and saved over \$14 million for consumers. “Empire Justice Center is very pleased by Governor Cuomo’s continued support for CHA, a statewide program that provides critical assistance to New Yorkers in accessing health services and best utilizing their insurance coverage to meet their health needs. We look forward to working with both the Governor and the Legislature to provide sufficient resources to fully fund and



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expand CHA services to engage more small business serving groups and assist more New Yorkers in need,” said Amy Lowenstein, a Senior Health Attorney with Empire Justice Center.

HCFANY looks forward to working with the Governor and the Legislature to secure quality, affordable health care for New Yorkers. A full analysis of the Executive Budget will be released in the coming weeks.