



**Ohio Children's Hospital Association**  
Saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives

## OFFICIAL STATEMENT

For immediate release

June 29, 2011

*Steve Allen, M.D., Chairman, Ohio Children's Hospital Association Board of Directors, and CEO, Nationwide Children's Hospital, today issued the following statement in response to the passage of the state biennial budget (Sub. HB 153) out of the Ohio General Assembly Conference Committee...*

As Ohio's children's hospitals work to save, protect and enhance the lives of Ohio's children, we want to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Governor Kasich, President Niehaus, Speaker Batchelder, Chairman Widener, Chairman Amstutz, the Ohio General Assembly and the Governor's Office of Health Transformation in ensuring that we could continue to fulfill this valuable mission.

In a time of unprecedented budget challenges, Ohio lawmakers made the health and wellbeing of Ohio's children a priority, working to minimize the negative impact of budget changes on our institutions. Ohio's public officials recognized the excellent value proposition Ohio's children's hospitals bring to the state, as Ohio's Medicaid spend for children is 22 percent below the national average with above average outcomes for children.

Additionally, our public officials understood that Ohio's children's hospitals already lose more money on Medicaid than any other Medicaid provider – losses that equate to \$427 million over a biennial budget – due to the more than 20 percent gap between Medicaid reimbursements and our costs. By restoring the children's hospital line item, clarifying the process for children's hospitals to become pediatric Accountable Care Organizations and ensuring that we have the ability to fairly negotiate managed care contracts, Ohio lawmakers have demonstrated their commitment to the state's most precious asset – our children.

In particular, we want to commend Senator Shannon Jones, who worked tirelessly to understand the policy needs of Ohio's children's hospitals to ensure appropriate changes were made to the budget as it moved through the Ohio Senate.

As our state moves forward in transforming the Medicaid program, we look forward to working with the Governor's Office of Health Transformation and the Ohio General Assembly to continue our efforts to improve outcomes and cut costs through our nationally renowned quality improvement efforts.

Ohio is fortunate to have the best statewide network of children's hospitals in the nation – and thanks to the efforts of Ohio lawmakers, we will be able to continue to provide the highest quality of care to every Ohio child, regardless of their family's ability to pay.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**STATE BUDGET TARGETS INVESTMENTS TO HELP OHIO'S CHILDREN**

*Health care, home visiting and mental treatment for youth receive essential funding*

COLUMBUS, July 1—Child advocates acknowledge Gov. Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly for investments for Ohio's children in the SFY 2012-2013 budget. "Despite the extreme economic challenges these leaders faced, they made strategic investments in what will work to help make kids healthier and families stronger," said Amy Swanson, CEO of Voices for Ohio's Children.

In particular, the budget maintains health coverage for children and pregnant women, funds Help Me Grow home visiting and Part C services for mothers and their babies, and invests resources in mental health treatment and services for youth involved in child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

In addition, the budget includes language to improve access of presumptive eligibility for children and pregnant women through qualified entities like Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Children's Hospitals. This provision will strengthen presumptive eligibility for children and extend this policy to pregnant women. It will ensure that eligible children with urgent health care needs and eligible pregnant women can access vital prenatal care more quickly. It also can improve the retention rate of eligible children and families, minimize redundant paperwork, reduce administrative costs associated with closing and reopening cases and ensure continuity of health care.

"We know that children in poor health do less well in school, complete fewer years of school, have poorer adult health and have lower earnings as adults," said Swanson. "Every month, Medicaid covers nearly 1.2 million Ohio children, helping reduce Ohio's number of uninsured children below the national average.

"Streamlining enrollment for children who should be receiving Medicaid will help move Ohio forward in achieving better health outcomes for our children. Lawmakers made changes to improve our system and reduce some of the administrative barriers so our kids won't have unnecessary delays in getting the health care they critically need."

Child advocates appreciate the state investments in emergency food and groceries for needy families, and supports for the most vulnerable children in our child welfare system.

"This budget helps sustain gains for kids in tough budget times," said Swanson. "Ohio leaders maintained investments in Ohio's children because it is the right thing to do, for our economy and our kids."

*Voices for Ohio's Children is a non-partisan voice of Ohio's nearly 3 million children. With more than 200 collaborative partners, we advance changes in public policy that improve the health, safety, education, and family stability of all Ohio children and their families. To learn more about Voices for Ohio's Children, please visit [www.vfc-oh.org](http://www.vfc-oh.org).*

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Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
*Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.*

Larke Recchie  
*Executive Director*

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**For Immediate Release:** Friday July 1, 2011

**Contact:** Larke Recchie 614-557-6239

Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging would like to extend our gratitude to Governor Kasich and Ohio's legislators for passing a budget which provides the opportunity for more Ohioans to receive home and community care when facing the need for nursing home care.

The Area Agencies on Aging have promoted these options for over 30 years as a win-win for Ohio. These services are preferred by most Ohioans and, at one third the cost of nursing home care; they help Ohio control Medicaid spending.

The final budget increases PASSPORT spending \$55.6 million over the next two years and makes it possible for 4,800 more Ohio seniors to receive home and community based services. This funding will prevent waiting lists and will help Ohio reach a balanced Medicaid long-term care budget.

We are grateful Governor Kasich's Office of Health Transformation and the Ohio legislature maintained an open dialogue with us as the budget process unfolded and that they showed their continued faith in the Area Agencies on Aging and the Aging Network in providing high quality long-term care alternatives to those who need them. We look forward to continuing to work with the Governor and legislature to improve the care of some of Ohio's most vulnerable citizens while.



**For Immediate Release:** Thursday, June 30, 2011  
**Contact:** Kathy Keller, AARP Ohio, (614) 222-1507

Jane Taylor, state director for AARP Ohio, today released this statement regarding the newly adopted state budget for FY 2012-2013:

“AARP commends Governor John Kasich and Ohio’s legislators for making strides in the newly adopted state budget to control escalating Medicaid costs by balancing the long-term care system to more effectively and efficiently serve older Ohioans through in-home and community-based services.”

“We appreciate that the funding provided in this budget is adequate to avoid waiting lists, ensuring that Medicaid-eligible Ohioans are guaranteed services that allow them to remain living at home.”

“For more than 15 years, AARP has advocated for real choice in long-term care settings, knowing that in-home and community based-care is what families and individuals prefer. Provisions in this budget ensure Ohioans will be able to get the most appropriate services to meet their needs, allowing them to avoid unnecessary and more expensive institutional care.

“We look forward to continuing to work with Gov. Kasich and Ohio’s legislators to make certain that quality long-term care services, funded through Medicaid, remain available to those who need them and at a price affordable for taxpayers.”

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Wednesday, June 29, 2011

**CONTACT:**

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## **Health Care Policy Changes in Budget Move Ohio Forward** ***Consumers Applaud Policymakers For Bold Changes and Look to Implementation***

**Statement of Cathy Levine and Col Owens, co-chairs of Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage, on the House and Senate Approved Budget**

(COLUMBUS, OH) - "The House and Senate are sending a historic health policy document to Governor Kasich for his signature. While not perfect, HB 153 contains bold changes to health care delivery and payment—changes that not only will improve health care for Medicaid enrollees but will improve health care for all Ohioans.

We are grateful that policymakers were not tempted to enact across the board cuts to eligibility or vital services for Medicaid as a cost-savings measure. Instead, budget policy changes will increase quality, contain spending, and work to transform the health care delivery system and prepare Ohio for implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

This budget will move Ohio toward balance in how we care for the most vulnerable by allowing more options and choice for care in lower cost settings. The budget will move Ohio toward more integration of care for behavioral and physical health. And, this budget will move Ohio toward better health outcomes for Ohioans dealing with multiple chronic conditions by using a 'health homes' model, and by giving authority to the Director of Medicaid to strengthen managed care performance measures to improve health care delivery and outcomes while reducing costs.

We are pleased that in the final budget negotiations, lawmakers prioritized additional investments in PASSPORT, community-based mental health services, and children's mental health services.

As consumers who have worked for years to improve the quality of care available to all Ohioans, we are excited with the potential to dramatically transform the health care delivery system. We look forward to working with lawmakers and the Administration to thoughtfully implement these policy changes and federal health care reform with meaningful input from consumers."

*Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage is a nonpartisan coalition uniting the diverse consumer voice with the goal of achieving affordable, high quality care for all. Our membership includes AFSCME Council 8 AFL-CIO, American Cancer Society East Central Division, Faith Community Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, National Alliance for Mental Illness of Ohio, National Multiple Sclerosis Society Ohio Chapters, Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans, Ohio Asian American Health Coalition, The Ohio Association of Centers for Independent Living, Ohio Council of Churches, Progress Ohio, Service Employees*

*International Union, Toledo Area Jobs with Justice Coalition, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1059, UHCAN Ohio, and We Are The Uninsured.*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 30, 2011

For more information,  
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### **Mental Health Advocates Grateful Not to be Forsaken**

Columbus, OH – The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio extends its gratitude to Governor John Kasich and the Members of the 129<sup>th</sup> General Assembly for prioritizing the needs of those with serious mental illness. “When we first learned of the \$8 billion deficit, we were all but certain that mental health’s ox would be gored. In fact, we even began planning a huge rally at the Statehouse to voice our outrage. Instead, we turned the event into a celebration of recovery with music and food!” said Executive Director Terry Russell.

“With the passage of this budget, Ohio’s leaders are sending a message to the nation that despite these hard times, ‘we will not forsake our most vulnerable citizens,’ ” Russell said. “Certainly, there remains a lot of work to do to turn our mental health system around, and the funds in this budget are not enough to meet all the needs that are out there. But truly, it could have been so much worse.”

NAMI Ohio is the statewide organization that serves as the voice on mental illness. The organization is comprised of thousands of family members, individuals, advocates and professionals working together to ensure that Ohioans with mental illness and their loved ones receive the treatment and support they need. Serious mental illness includes such illnesses as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and serious depression.

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The Trusted Voice for Providers  
Serving Ohioans with Disabilities

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 14, 2011

**OHIO DD PROVIDERS THANK GOVERNOR KASICH, GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR  
THOUGHTFUL APPROACH TO STATE BUDGET**

(Columbus, OH) --- The Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) extends its genuine appreciation to Governor John Kasich, his administration and members of Ohio's General Assembly for their thoughtful and supportive approach to budgeting for Ohio's developmental disabilities system. Am. Sub. H.B. 153 as passed reflects a comprehensive policy-driven document that includes significant changes for Ohio's developmental disabilities system.

In a move of true significance, the Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF) residential program was transitioned from the Department of Jobs and Family Services to the Department of Developmental Disabilities. Accompanying the transition is a 2 year temporary funding formula that mitigates in part the existing punitive rate rollbacks and puts in place parameters for the creation of a new permanent reimbursement formula designed to add equitability and predictability. In addition the 1 percent proposed cut in the ICF rate was restored through the legislative process.

As an alternative to an across the board rate cut for DD waiver providers the Department of Developmental Disabilities proposed a voluntary 3 percent reduction in service utilization over the biennium. This allows providers, county DD boards and families an opportunity to collaboratively and responsibly work together to identify approaches to meet the budgeted utilization cap.

Am. Sub. H.B. 153 does include approximately \$62 million in cuts to county DD boards primarily through subsidy reductions. In some instances the budget offers alternative sources of funding including a proposal to increase the targeted case management rate and a reduction in HCBS waiver fees.

OPRA President Mark Davis summarized the budget results, "We are grateful to Governor Kasich and the members of the General Assembly for the approach they took to this budget. In a period of significant budget challenges Am. Sub. H.B. 153 as passed could have been devastating to providers and individuals with disabilities. Instead, it has held us relatively stable in a period of prolonged instability. This budget also highlights areas of opportunity. It will be up to us as a system, working together, to realize the potential," said Davis.

***About OPRA***

Founded in 1974 OPRA is a non-profit organization that represents community based providers of services to individuals with disabilities. OPRA's membership consists of more than 150 organizations providing services to more than 15,000 Ohioans with developmental disabilities. [www.opra.org](http://www.opra.org)

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