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Insert date

The Honorable [insert full name]
Governor of [insert state]
[insert address]
[insert city, state, zip]

RE: Federal health care reform

Dear Governor [insert name],

NAMI [insert state], the National Alliance on Mental Illness, respectfully requests that you urge our U.S. Senators to focus federal health care reform on stabilizing the small group and individual insurance markets, not on restructuring Medicaid financing with deep cuts to the program. Medicaid is a lifeline for people with mental health and substance use conditions and the most significant source of mental health funding for people with serious mental illness.

NAMI is deeply concerned that fundamentally altering the financing of Medicaid with per capita caps or block grants will shift extraordinary costs onto our state and have devastating consequences for vulnerable Americans, including people with mental illness. This threatens to drive up homelessness, incarceration and suicide. Proposed changes might promise more flexibility, but will, instead, deeply undermine our state's ability to provide the vital treatment and supports that people with mental illness need to stay in school, get back to work, and stay off the streets and out of costly jails and emergency rooms.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has projected that the American Health Care Act (AHCA) would result in \$834 billion in cuts to Medicaid over the coming decade and the loss of health coverage for 14 million people nationally. In our state, an estimated [insert number from spreadsheet] people with mental health and substance use conditions would lose Medicaid coverage¹ and people who retain their Medicaid coverage will likely face fewer crisis beds, providers, medications and mental health and substance use services. The mental health crisis in our state will get far worse.

Please exert your leadership with our U.S. Senators to urge them to focus on stabilizing the insurance market, not destabilizing Medicaid and mental health care for the people of our state. We know that early intervention for people with mental health conditions changes the course of mental illness and helps people get back to school, on the job and on track with their lives.

Respectfully yours,

Insert NAMI leader signature
Printed Name and Title

Cc: [insert your U.S. Senators]

¹ David Cutler and Emily Gee, *Coverage Losses by Congressional District Under the House ACA Repeal Bill*, Center for American Progress (March 17, 2017) available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/news/2017/03/17/428601/coverage-losses-congressional-district-house-aca-repeal-bill/>. We calculated these numbers based on SAMHSA's estimate that 24.9% of the population has a mental health and/or

substance use condition. Judith Dey et al., Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, *Benefits of Medicaid Expansion for Behavioral Health*, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/190506/BHMedicaidExpansion.pdf> (2016).