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FAH RESPONSE TO PROPOSED HOUSE BUDGET RESOLUTION

The following statement was released today by Chip Kahn, President and CEO of the Federation of American Hospitals:

The FAH understands the pressing need for America's policymakers to grapple with the fiscal challenges facing this nation. At the same time, however, action to mitigate our fiscal challenges should not weaken health care for our seniors or the already fragile health care safety net for our most vulnerable citizens.

The Medicaid spending reductions envisioned in the proposed House Budget Resolution released today raises serious concerns because it would result in the loss of health coverage for millions of low income Americans, reduce critical benefits for others, and make it more difficult for hospitals, clinicians, and other health care providers to deliver the care so many need.

Repeal of the coverage expansions, while at the same time retaining the Medicare and Medicaid cuts that went along with those expansions, is of particular concern. Sustaining these cuts will severely impact access to essential medical care for seniors, as well as the lowest income Americans. The combined effect of dropping the new coverage and maintaining the cuts threatens the care that communities depend on, and will place harsh limits on the very health care providers who are frequently the most significant job creators in their local communities.

We want to work with the Congress to find the balance between getting our nation's fiscal house in order and maintaining access to needed health care. We understand that reforms are to be expected. Yet, as we all join in reform, we must not undermine the critical role that our nation expects of its community hospitals, clinicians and other health care providers.

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The Federation of American Hospitals is the national representative of investor-owned or managed hospitals and health systems. Our members include general community and teaching hospitals in urban and rural areas as well as rehabilitation, long-term, cancer and psychiatric hospitals.

