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NJCDD Statement on the Importance of Medicaid in the Lives of People with Developmental Disabilities

The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities is deeply concerned with reports of proposed cuts to Medicaid. Of particular concern is the fear and anxiety generated by this speculation. It is vital that reason and truth be the driving force during this time. We seek dialogue with our legislators and policymakers to renew the importance of and the need for undiminished funding for Medicaid.

Medicaid is a critical funding source for people with disabilities to receive safe and adequate care within their communities. **Medicaid funds the vast majority of services and community-based supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).** In fact, in order to receive any kind of services through the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, residents **MUST** be Medicaid-eligible. Far more than simply paying for visits to the doctor, Medicaid funding allows people with I/DD to access in-home supports; day programs; job coaching and employment support; respite services for their loved ones; physical, cognitive, and behavioral therapies; prescription drugs; medical equipment; and much more. In New Jersey, nearly 200,000 individuals with disabilities rely on Medicaid for healthcare and disability-related support services.

In order to protect and maintain the progress that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and advocates have worked so hard for over the past several decades, we **MUST** urge our policymakers in Congress as well as the President to maintain full funding of Medicaid as well as the protections established within the Affordable Care Act.