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## HCA Testifies at Legislative Hearing Against \$1 Billion Assault on Home Care

HCA President Joanne Cunningham today delivered testimony before a joint hearing of the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means Committees urging the Legislature's rejection of the disastrous, disproportionate and lethal home care reductions and unfunded wage mandates in the package recently approved by the Cuomo Administration-led Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT): **a \$1 billion impact to home care, according to updated estimates.**

"The disastrous proposals advanced by the MRT pursue a misguided path of direct cuts, unfunded wage mandates and a one-size-fits-all approach to care management that would collapse long-standing, successful program models as part of an unprecedented \$1 billion impact on New York's home care system," Cunningham said. "While home care represents 12% of Medicaid, the home care cuts, reduction actions, and unfunded wage mandates total 36% of all provider impacts included in and resulting from the MRT package."

Cunningham added: "Every single day, home care saves millions of Medicaid dollars and keeps the health system functioning while providing life-saving and life-sustaining care to hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. Without these services, hospitals and emergency rooms would overflow; elderly, chronically ill, and disabled patients would be institutionalized; and taxpayers would be paying higher Medicaid costs."

Despite not having a seat at the MRT table, HCA has repeatedly shared with the Executive and Legislature HCA's own proposals for making the Medicaid system more efficient. These proposals, largely excluded from the MRT process, are outlined in HCA's *Blueprint for Home Care Reform and Efficiency* and amount to hundreds of millions of dollars in savings. Cunningham urged the Legislature's consideration of HCA's more constructive, policy-based proposals in place of direct home care cuts, mandatory managed care enrollment, and unfunded wage mandates in the MRT plan.

She noted that direct cuts alone are enough to ravage major components of the home care infrastructure, given that 70% of home care providers are operating in the red. On top of direct cuts, the enrollment of chronically ill, disabled and elderly patients into a single model of care management will decimate existing care models which already save health care dollars. **These MRT proposals together will cut \$523 million from the existing home care system.**

Cunningham also explained that an unfunded home care wage mandate would unfairly impose new costs on providers – **to the tune of \$418 million per year** – at the same time that providers are deluged with chronic cuts and underpayments which already fail to provide the reimbursement necessary to support such wage increases.

"The home care community certainly supports a payment system that provides adequate reimbursement for services and compensation for caregivers," she said. "But this proposal amounts to an unprecedented form of state wage control for a single category of worker without any corresponding payment support from the state."

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