



American Academy
of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



March 15, 2017

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman
Committee on Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Concerns regarding impact of Medicaid cuts to military and veteran families

Dear Chairmen Hatch and Upton, Ranking Members Wyden and Pallone:

The Tricare for Kids (TFK) Coalition, a stakeholder group of military and veterans' service organizations, military families, children's healthcare advocacy and professional organizations, and disability advocacy groups, would like to express deep concerns regarding the impact of Medicaid program cuts contained in the American Health Care Act (AHCA) on military and veteran families.

While all children have distinct needs as compared to adults, children in military families face unique experiences due to the very nature of their parents' service to our nation. The practical difficulties that accompany deployments and frequent relocations must be taken into consideration when fashioning the health, medical and social support systems necessary to maintain military readiness.

The Tricare for Kids Coalition is extremely concerned about the impact that a per capita funding stream for Medicaid have on military and veteran families who access Medicaid for a variety of reasons, including:

- **Transitions:** While recent veterans are eligible for VA health care, those without employer-sponsored coverage may rely on Medicaid for their families who no longer have Tricare and are not covered by the VA.
- **Complex Conditions:** For approximately 200,000 military children, Medicaid is required as a stable source of coverage for some of the most comprehensive and complex care that commercial and Tricare plans do not offer.
- **Secondary Insurer:** Medicaid is also required to serve as a second payer to cover benefits that Tricare, tied directly to Medicare fashioned for adults age 65 and above, does not comprehensively provide.
- **Waiver Services:** Medicaid waivers provide crucial services, not covered by Tricare, for those with special needs. Because the demand for these services far outstrips the supply, most states have lengthy waitlists to receive assistance. These services are often out of reach for mobile military families who have to start over at the bottom of the waitlist each time they move to a new state. Proposed cuts to the Medicaid program will result in longer waitlists for all eligible children, but with a disproportionate effect on military families.
- **Pediatric infrastructure:** Many military kids rely on care from the same civilian providers that take care of the more than 35 million children enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP. If that civilian infrastructure is compromised, it will exacerbate the health care access challenges our military children already face as a result of their mobile lives.

We urge you to reject Medicaid cuts and the per capita cap policy in the AHCA that would limit states' and providers' ability to provide services to all children, including children of military and veteran families. Thank you for your consideration. We stand ready to discuss or provide further information at your convenience.

Tricare for Kids Coalition



cc: Senate and House Armed Services Committee Chairs and Ranking Members