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WHA Urges Washington to Act on Health Care

Statement by Eric Borgerding, WHA President/CEO

MADISON (August 4, 2017) ----- With the news that California-based health insurance company Molina Healthcare is abandoning Wisconsin's insurance exchange, Wisconsin Hospital Association President & CEO Eric Borgerding called on Congress to act immediately to stabilize insurance markets and preserve coverage in Wisconsin:

"Affordable coverage is critical to ensuring people can access health care. Continuing inaction by Congress is leading to uncertainty and turmoil and now threatening Wisconsin's great progress in extending coverage to the uninsured. WHA agrees with the National Governors Association Health Committee, who in a statement yesterday urged the Administration to 'fully fund cost sharing reductions (CSRs) for the remainder of calendar year 2017 through 2018. This is a necessary step to stabilize the individual marketplaces in the short term as Congress and the Administration address long-term reform efforts.'

The potential loss of CSRs will drive up premiums and dramatically increase out-of-pocket expenses, which will make coverage unaffordable for nearly a quarter of a million people in our state. More than half, or 111,318 of the 216,335* people in Wisconsin who purchase insurance on the exchange, receive a cost-sharing reduction.

Wisconsin's uninsured rate has been cut nearly in half since 2014. With the loss of the CSRs, the number of people without coverage will increase, as will the level of uncompensated care in our hospitals and health systems.

Wisconsin rejected Obamacare Medicaid expansion and disenrolled some 60,000 people from Medicaid because of the availability of affordable coverage on the exchange. The exchanges and the CSRs are a fundamental and intentional component of Wisconsin's unique approach to coverage expansion. Today, as go the exchanges, so goes the viability of Wisconsin's coverage model.

We have much at stake in what comes next, and something must come next. Inaction is not an option nor is intentionally allowing failure of insurance markets an acceptable strategy or outcome."

END

*Source: Kaiser Family Foundation <http://kaiserf.am/2u4jXOO>