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Press Release

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Leaders Across the State Applaud Governor's Signing of Bipartisan Bill Reauthorizing New Hampshire Health Protection Program

CONCORD – After Governor Maggie Hassan signed today House Bill 1696, bipartisan legislation reauthorizing the New Hampshire Health Protection Program, stakeholders in the fight against the heroin and opioid crisis from across the state – including law enforcement, fire fighters, advocates, the medical community, local officials and business leaders – applauded the work of the Governor and members from both parties:

"The New Hampshire Health Protection Program is critical to helping law enforcement stem the tide of the heroin and opioid epidemic. Renewing this vital program ensures that we can continue to tackle the heroin and opioid crisis with a comprehensive approach that focuses on prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts. I thank Governor Hassan for her commitment to renewing this important program." – Strafford County Sheriff David Dubois

"Each day, fire fighters throughout New Hampshire are on the front lines of combating the heroin and opioid crisis, and it is critical we have every resource available to help in those efforts. Reauthorization of the New Hampshire Health Protection Program is a critical step forward in this fight, as it will help increase access to treatment and prevention programs. I am grateful Governor Hassan and state legislators were able to work across party lines to get this done for our state." – Goffstown Fire Chief and New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs President Richard O'Brien

"House Bill 1696 is an important step forward in maintaining access to health care for hard-working New Hampshire residents in a fiscally responsible manner." – State Representative Joseph Lachance, House Bill 1696 Prime Sponsor

"Health care costs are commonly cited by our small business members as a challenge to growth. By re-authorizing the NH Health Protection Program through HB1696 not only are we creating healthier communities by ensuring more than 48,000 low-income individuals continue to have access to health care coverage, but we are also taking a positive step to address the health care costs facing small businesses. This program is reducing the uncompensated care costs in our health care system and will put downward pressure on health insurance premiums in the future." – Mike Skelton, President & CEO, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce

"Like other illnesses, positive outcomes are more likely to occur for people with mental illness the sooner they get into treatment. Providing health insurance coverage to close to 50,000 Granite State residents by reauthorizing the NH Health Protection Program will continue to result in many of them seeking out mental health and substance misuse treatment before it becomes a crisis. NAMI NH is deeply appreciative of the bipartisan support of the Legislature and Governor in passing this important piece of legislation." – Ken Norton, Executive Director, NAMI NH – The National Alliance on Mental Illness

"Today's signing of HB 1696 by Governor Hassan represents a continuation of New Hampshire's commitment to ensure that people suffering from addiction will have access to critically needed treatment and recovery services, and assures substance use disorder treatment providers who want to expand capacity that reimbursement for services provided to thousands of Granite Staters will continue. The NH Health Protection Program is the most important tool NH has in its fight against the opioid epidemic and more broadly the substance misuse crisis ravaging our state." – Linda Paquette, Executive Director, New Futures

"Today, thousands of Granite Staters can rest assured that they will continue to have access to critical substance use treatment and recovery support services. And providers can continue their work to expand treatment and

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recovery access to individuals and families struggling with the opiate epidemic." – Tym Rourke, Chair, Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Recovery

"We know that we cannot arrest our way out of the heroin and opioid crisis, and that strengthening prevention, treatment and recovery efforts is critical to a comprehensive approach. The New Hampshire Health Protection Program has provided substance misuse and behavioral health services to thousands of Granite Staters, and its reauthorization will help us increase treatment capacity. The collaboration that made reauthorization possible is a strong example of how we must all work together to combat the heroin and opioid crisis." – James Vara, Senior Assistant Attorney General, New Hampshire Drug Prosecuting Unit and Incoming Governor's Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health

"Hospitals applaud the strong, bipartisan efforts from the Governor, Senate and House leadership and stakeholders across the State to reauthorize the New Hampshire Health Protection Program (NHHPP) so that the more than 48,000 Granite State residents can continue to count on the private health insurance coverage that is allowing them to get the primary and preventative care they need to become and remain healthy. The NHHPP has successfully reduced the number of uninsured patients seeking care in emergency rooms; reduced the amount of uncompensated care provided by hospitals to those without insurance; and reduced the cost shift to those with insurance. It is a significant step forward for patients, providers, businesses and our state's economy." – Steve Ahnen, President, New Hampshire Hospital Association

"I thank Governor Hassan and the legislature for their tireless work to reauthorize the New Hampshire Health Protection Program. Their efforts will enable people in Nashua and across the state to continue to seeking and receiving treatment to achieve recovery from opioid addiction. The success of this bipartisan plan shows again how Governor Hassan and the legislators know how to get things done the Granite State way—by rolling up her sleeves and working across the aisle to find common ground and move the ball forward." – Nashua Mayor Jim Donchess

"I applaud Governor Hassan and Senator Woodburn for their tireless efforts to renew the New Hampshire Health Protection Program. The New Hampshire Health Protection Program has been particularly critical to our citizens in Coos County, where the program has helped 1,800 Granite Staters access quality, affordable health insurance. The program also provides vital resources to combat the heroin and opioid crisis in our state, providing access to substance abuse treatment and recovery centers for those who would not be able to afford these services otherwise. Reauthorization will give these families the flexibility to move forward with their lives and in our communities." – Berlin Mayor Paul Grenier

"I applaud Governor Hassan and the bipartisan coalition of State House Members and Senators whose dedicated efforts made the renewal of our Medicaid Expansion program possible. This vital reauthorization will allow nearly 50,000 of our fellow Granite Staters to keep their health insurance and access the healthcare they need – everything from cancer screenings and preventative care to substance abuse recovery and treatment. Through this program, thousands of Granite Staters have been able to access substance abuse and behavioral health services, and it is an important part of increasing treatment capacity." – Mayor Dana Hilliard, Somersworth

"Fighting New Hampshire's devastating opioid and substance abuse crisis is a priority Governor Hassan and I share, and I salute her for her leadership in passing the New Hampshire Health Protection Program to protect access to treatment and recovery for tens of thousands of Granite Staters. Her hard work and careful stewardship of this bill will save lives by renewing health insurance for nearly 50,000 people across our state and improving access to substance abuse treatment for many more." – Keene Mayor Kendall Lane

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