

## PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENTS

### HEALTH SERVICES ARE A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT

(Washington, DC – June 16, 2017) NCNW believes that access to affordable health care services is a basic human right. NCNW supports the availability of comprehensive health services to all persons regardless of income or socioeconomic status. NCNW also believes that access and availability of health services should not be restricted by age, geography or pre-existing condition.

According to the American Medical Association, “by replacing income-based premium subsidies with age-based tax credits, the American Health Care Act (AHCA), as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, will also make coverage more expensive – if not out of reach – for poor and sick Americans.”

In May, 2017, AARP identified these important gaps in the AHCA. At the time, the legislation would:

1. Impose an age tax. Insurers could increase charges to older adults up to five times what younger consumers pay for health insurance;
2. Allow insurers to charge higher premiums to 25 million people ages 50 to 64 who have a preexisting condition, such as cancer, diabetes or heart disease;
3. Permit states to force people with pre-existing conditions into high-risk pools with sky-high premiums;
4. Jeopardize coverage of essential benefits such as emergency services, hospitalization, mental health services and chronic disease management;
5. Cut Medicaid funding by \$880 billion over 10 years. More than 17 million low-income seniors, children and adults with disabilities rely on Medicaid;
6. Leave millions of Americans without health insurance. Under this legislation, as many as 22 million people would lose their health care coverage within a decade, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

The American people sense there is a serious problem with the proposed legislation. According to the New York Times, “In recent national polls, fewer than 30 percent of Americans support the bill (AHCA.) It is the most unpopular piece of major legislation Congress has considered in decades – even more unloved than TARP (‘the bailout’), and much more unpopular than the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare.”

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We urge Senators to keep the best interests of all Americans in mind as they craft legislation that affects 6% of the U.S. economy and millions of American families. We further urge the Senate to:

- a. Hold public hearings so that the American people can understand the proposed changes before they occur;
- b. Publish the draft legislation in advance of any vote so that the American people may express their support/opposition to various provisions;
- c. Consider a “Medicare for All” plan similar those in Canada and Australia;
- d. Empower state and federal policy makers to improve the health care marketplaces by building on the advances offered by the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare);
- e. Reject efforts to roll back Medicaid or punish states that chose to expand Medicaid.

NCNW is a coalition of organizations, comprised of 200 community-based sections and 30 national women’s organizations that enlightens, inspires and connects more than 3,000,000 women and men. Its mission is to lead, advocate for and empower women of African descent, their families and communities. NCNW was founded in 1935 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, influential educator and activist, and for more than fifty years, the iconic Dr. Dorothy Height was president of NCNW.

Today, NCNW’s programs are grounded on a foundation of critical concerns known as “Four for the Future”. NCNW promotes education with a special focus on science, technology, engineering and math; encourages entrepreneurship, financial literacy and economic stability; educates women about good health and HIV/AIDS; promotes civic engagement and advocates for sound public policy.

### Sources:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/theapothecary/2016/04/20/the-u-s-health-system-is-not-an-economic-burden/#6b325c382832>

<http://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/blog/2017/jun/aca-market-stability>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/14/upshot/gop-senators-might-not-realize-it-but-not-one-state-supports-the-ahca.html>

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### NCNW DEMANDS FAIR AND EQUAL TREATMENT OF SENATOR KAMALA HARRIS

(Washington, DC – June 15, 2017) We strongly urge the leaders of the United States Senate to treat Senator Kamala Harris with the deference and respect that is a hallmark of the U.S. Senate. The Senate must be conducted by one set of rules for all Senators. The fact that Senator Harris is persistent in attempting to get answers to her questions should not form a basis for singling her out for interruption. Senators routinely request yes or no answers in order to maximize the amount of material they can cover in the limited time allowed. Her questions are incisive, but never rudely put. Senator Harris was an able prosecutor and conducts herself with the decorum becoming the U.S. Senate and, therefore should be treated like a full member of the Senate. Clearly, Senator Harris is a student of the issues, takes the process seriously, articulates her questions thoughtfully and is rude to no one. If it is not her demeanor, knowledge or manner that single her out for rude interruption, viewers and voters will be left to draw the unfortunate conclusion that Senator Harris is the subject of unusual (and illegal) treatment, because of her gender and/or her race. NCNW members and affiliates, and the American people expect and deserve more from the world's most exclusive deliberative body.

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### PRESERVE THE WOMEN'S BUREAU OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



#### ADVOCACY ALERT - YOUR HELP NEEDED DURING JUNE!

(June 6, 2017 – Washington, D.C.) As you know, the National Council of Negro Women advocates for sound public policy affecting the economic stability of women, their families and communities. Today, we share important information that will affect all working women, and once again ask you to contact your U.S. Senators and Members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Women's Bureau is the only agency in the entire federal government dedicated to empowering women to achieve economic security. The proposed budget will cut the Women's Bureau's budget by almost 70%, eliminating all of the regional offices and essentially rendering the agency unable to fulfill its mission of empowering women.

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The Women's Bureau is a reliable source of research on women's employment trends that has shaped workplace policy significantly over the years, including minimum wage, over-time and family and medical leave.

NCNW members have a personal stake in the Women's Bureau. Before she was Secretary of Labor, Dorothy Height Foundation Chair Alexis Herman led the Women's Bureau. NCNW's 2016 entrepreneurship curriculum was developed by the Women's Bureau. NCNW's current national program chair, Paulette Norvel Lewis, was an official of the Women's Bureau.

**NCNW's input is essential THIS MONTH.** Congress will recess in July for the summer. Members of the Senate and House of Representatives must hear from us before the recess. If we reach out to Congress, they will consider our request to **Preserve the Women's Bureau.**

### TAKE ACTION - ADVOCATE

**Tweet, call, email or fax or meet with your U.S. Representatives THIS MONTH. Ask your Contacts, NCNW Sisters, LinkedIn Contacts, Facebook Friends and Family to do the same.**

[Click Here to Contact the U.S. House of Representatives](#)

[Click here to contact your U.S. Senator](#)

**The message is simple:**

**#Preserve the Women's Bureau.**  
**Keep America's promise of economic security to working women.**

Thanks for what you have already done. Together we are making a positive difference.

### EDUCATION BENEFITS OUTWEIGH COSTS

(June 2, 2017 – Washington, D.C.) The proposed federal budget includes \$9.2 billion dollars in cuts to federal education programs. Programs and services scheduled for reduction include Title One, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, Title IV ESSA (which funds computer science literacy grants), Career and Technical Education, Special Olympics, TRIO and Upward Bound. Cutting effective programs may prove to be penny-wise and pound foolish. There is no assertion that these programs are outmoded, wasteful or ineffective.

Nothing works better than education to raise lifetime earnings, improve family stability, decrease income inequality, reduce crime and improve competitiveness. It is wiser to have high quality

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public education for all children, regardless of socio-economic status, geography or race. We should resist the temptation to think of education as a commodity reserved for the privileged among us. Students from all walks of life benefit from increased educational opportunity. Moreover, education is good for the nation - not just the individual - because it teaches more than job skills. Learning lights the path to citizenship. For example, black boys who attend college reduce the odds of incarceration from 30% to 5% (even if they don't graduate). In short, education pays for itself.

The National Council of Negro Women urges the House of Representatives to give careful thought before reducing the effectiveness of the nation's educational effort. The National Council of Negro Women is a 3,000,000-member coalition of women's groups that was organized 82 years ago by Mary McLeod Bethune, who was an advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In its early decades NCNW fought for peace and against race discrimination. Today, NCNW works to lead, advocate and empower women of African descent and their families. The key to empowerment is education.

### SENSIBLE GUN OWNERSHIP

(June 22, 2016 – Washington, D.C.) NCNW expresses its sympathy for those whose lives were savagely taken at the Pulse nightclub and we are heartbroken for the loved ones of the victims of the Orlando terror attack.

The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) agrees with efforts to prevent terrorism suspects from acquiring guns or explosives. There is no reason to permit a person with sufficient ties to terrorism that they are included on a no-fly list to obtain a weapon.

NCNW also agrees that it is time to close the gun show/Internet loophole. Gun purchasers should undergo background checks no matter where the purchase is made. There is no rational distinction to be made between guns sold online, in a brick-and-mortar store or at a temporary gun show. If anything, it makes even more sense to conduct a background check when the sale is made at a gun show or on an Internet site, where buyers and sellers are mostly anonymous. We would go further. Permitting a gun purchaser to obtain a weapon if the background check cannot be completed in three days makes no sense, either. Dylan Roof might have been stopped from slaying nine Bible study students in Charleston had he been denied a gun as a result of the crimes that a completed background check would have revealed.

There is no reason to sell assault type military weapons to civilians not involved in law enforcement. There are more guns in America than people. The firearms business in the US is an \$8 billion industry. Every two years, as many Americans die from gunshot wounds as died during the entire Viet Nam war. Most of these deaths do not occur as a result of mass shootings. Most of them occur as random acts of violence in the nation's cities and suburbs. Some of our most vibrant US cities are besieged by nightly gun battles between rival criminal gangs.

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Gun ownership is protected by the U.S. Constitution, but that right is not absolute. No right is absolute. The right to free speech is not absolute. Libel and slander are not protected. The right to practice religion does not give the worshipper permission to take a human life as sacrifice. The right to freely assemble does not include the right to associate with felons if one has been convicted of a felony. The right to vote does not include the right to skip voter registration. All rights carry responsibilities.

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A majority of Americans support efforts to stop terrorists from obtaining weapons. Most Republicans and NRA members support expanding background checks. If most Americans agree that dangerous people should not have dangerous weapons, then who disagrees? Where is the real opposition to responsible gun ownership? If the NRA is not representing its members' views, then whose views are they espousing?

According to Mother Jones magazine, 10 companies they investigated in 2013 “produce more than 8 million firearms per year for buyers in the United States, accounting for more than two-thirds of the total market.” The report goes on to say, “Many of these companies' top executives ...are members of the Golden Ring of Freedom, an exclusive club for \$1 million-plus donors to the National Rifle Association.”

According to the Mother Jones Report, “In the year following the massacre in Newtown, Connecticut, the three largest gun makers—Sturm Ruger, Remington Outdoor, and Smith & Wesson—netted more than \$390 million in profits on record sales. Shares in publicly traded Sturm Ruger and Smith & Wesson jumped more than 70 percent that year...The hedge fund that owns Remington Outdoor—maker of the assault rifle used in Newtown—saw the annual return on its investment grow tenfold.”

We commend those Senators who held the floor of the U.S. Senate for nearly 15 hours last week. We urge the entire body to vote favorably on the measures that have been proposed. We commend those members of the House of Representatives who insist, “no bill, no break.” The National Council of Negro Women urges the Senate and the House of Representatives to heed the anguish of the American people. Make it more difficult for dangerous people to own dangerous weapons. Disarm terror, domestic and foreign.