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FOSTERING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

June 14, 2017

The Honorable Senator Scott Oelslager  
Chair, Ohio Senate Finance Committee  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Oelslager:

As a collaboration of Lucas County health systems focused on improving community health and addressing health disparities, we have a strong interest in making Ohio Medicaid better, both for recipients and taxpayers. We know you have the same goal, so we are sharing our assurances – and our misgivings – about the proposed state budget in relation to Medicaid.

Medicaid works for both Ohio and Ohioans, and we applaud the Ohio House of Representatives for continuing Medicaid coverage for all existing populations. As discussions continue regarding Ohio Medicaid, however, we request that the Ohio Senate and ultimately the Ohio General Assembly stay the course and give Medicaid coverage in its current form a chance to prove invaluable in statewide health transformation efforts. We all want to continue moving toward high-quality care at a reasonable cost and emphasizing value over volume. Premature and excessive changes in Medicaid, we fear, could have unintended consequences for some of our state's most vulnerable residents and the healthcare system that cares for them.

Our collaborative, Fostering Healthy Communities, also supports continued removal of non-contracting language in the proposed state budget as was done in 2009 and 2011. While the state's use of managed care plans to serve Medicaid beneficiaries is advantageous, it is vital that hospitals be able to negotiate contract terms with them. Otherwise, Medicaid managed care plans could refuse contracts with willing providers, which limits beneficiary choices and puts the system at risk.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns about altering Ohio's Medicaid program now. Jan Ruma, Vice President of the Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio, is available to answer any questions on our behalf at 419-842-0800 or jruma@hcno.org.

Sincerely,

Kevin Webb, PhD, FACHE  
Chief Acute  
& Post-Acute Care Officer  
ProMedica

Daniel Barbee, RN, BSN, MBA  
CEO  
University of Toledo Medical Center

Jeffrey Dempsey, BBA, MBA  
President  
Mercy Health St. Vincent Medical  
Center & Children's Hospital

COPY: Members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee  
Members of the Ohio General Assembly Representing Lucas County