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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislation Introduced to Prioritize Care Delivery at Home
*State Assembly introduces “New York Home Care First Act”
reestablishing Home Care Priority Policy within the State, drafted by
the Home Care Association of New York State*

ALBANY -- The Home Care Association of New York State (HCA) is pleased to share that Assemblyman Richard Gottfried has introduced HCA-proposed legislation, the “New York Home Care First Act” (A.9148), which reprioritizes home care as a primary option for patients across the continuum of need, and conceptually aligns the state’s policies, rates and procedures with this principle.

The need and opportunity for comprehensively re-recognizing and supporting home care’s core and pivotal role in the health care delivery system is now. Agencies, workers, health plans — perhaps most importantly patients and families — need this action.

When the NYS Legislature established Article 36 of the public health law in 1977, they specifically declared the expansion, availability and provision of home care services to be “a primary focus of the state’s actions.” The law intended a focus of state policy, planning and development toward this priority goal and ensured coordination and consistency in state actions.

“Critical state support of the services, workers and home care’s role throughout the health system urgently require renewed focus, realignment and reprioritization commensurate with New Yorkers’ needs,” says HCA President & CEO, Al Cardillo. “The need and benefits of home care have never been clearer nor so great, today and into the future.”

In presenting concerns about this situation to the State Legislature, particularly in the wake of COVID-19’s patient, agency, worker and system-wide impacts, HCA has fervently called for the adoption of a “home care first” policy for the state. Individuals across the continuum of need and at risk of institutionalization who could be appropriately and beneficially served by home care should inarguably have this option. To make this option viable, HCA argued that the state’s policies, financing, supports and related health strategies must be firmly and consistently aligned to this goal.

HCA testimony at legislative hearings on COVID and the elderly led to officials asking HCA to draft enabling legislation for this policy change. HCA developed, and the Legislature has now introduced “The New York Home Care First Act” (HCF) to reinforce home care as a principal option for patients across the continuum of need, and to align the state’s policies, rates and procedures consistent with this overall policy.

HCA asks the Governor to embrace and the Legislature to swiftly pass this urgently needed measure for New Yorkers. A summary of the bill’s provisions is attached to this release.

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About the [Home Care Association](#): For over 40 years, HCA has been a leading state and federal advocate for quality, community-based care. HCA represents hundreds of dedicated organizations and their thousands of home and community-based staff. They are a resource for information, providing policy and regulatory expertise, professional development, education and training opportunities to support you.



NY Home Care First Act (A.9148) Summary of Provisions

The HCF legislation provides a key opportunity for a comprehensive re-recognition and support of home care's core and pivotal role in the health care continuum. Home care agencies, workers, patients and health plans need this critical action.

Specifically, this legislation prioritizes home care by amending the preamble to Article 36 of the Public Health Law, renewing the core focus on home care and the accessibility of home care services ***as a state public policy priority*** and further advancing and prioritizing home care by:

- Providing explicit statute ensuring that all individuals, when medically appropriate and before referral for institutionalization, to first be presented the option to be assessed and considered for care at home.
- Requiring comprehensive state financial and programmatic support for high level home care services.
- Providing for new funding for recruitment, training, compensation and retention of the home care workforce, including addressing improved funding for wages, targeting shortages and related critical supports.
- Providing for information and guidance to assist referral for home care by hospitals, nursing homes, physicians, and other applicable settings, including the discharge planning process.
- Providing for a comprehensive public education program about home care.
- Requiring home care's inclusion in the state's strategic primary, preventive and public health initiatives and policies (addressing what is a near-constant omission or exclusion from key programming, supports and policies).
- Requiring home care inclusion in state programs that provide capital, infrastructure (including emergency medical records and clinical point of service technologies) and workforce development support and funding.

As we have all witnessed since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need and benefits of home care have never been clearer nor greater than they are today and into the future. Yet after decades of increasing state-disconnect and loss of cohesion with this core policy, responsible state support of the services, workers and home care's role throughout the health system urgently require renewed focus, realignment, and reprioritization commensurate with New Yorkers' needs.