June 29, 2017

Craig Sullivan, Executive Director
County Supervisors Association of Arizona
1905 W. Washington, Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85009

Re: Letter and Resolution Regarding the Ongoing Debate on National Healthcare Legislation

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

Please find enclosed a June 28, 2017 letter and resolution transmitted to Senators John McCain and Jeff Flake regarding national healthcare legislation. The Senate legislation, as well as that passed in the House, will significantly increase healthcare costs to the State of Arizona. Since all counties participate through payment to the acute and long-term indigent healthcare systems in Arizona, counties will undoubtedly be called on to make increasing contributions if the present legislation is successful and becomes law.

Given the history of the State in passing their costs on to the counties, it is appropriate to comment on this proposed legislation. Please feel free to forward the action of the Pima County Board of Supervisors to other counties in Arizona.

Sincerely,

C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

CHH/anc
Enclosures

C: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors  
    Jan Lesher, Chief Deputy County Administrator  
    Dr. Francisco Garcia, Assistant County Administrator for Community and Health Services  
    Michael Racy, Racy Associates, Inc.
June 28, 2017

The Honorable Senator John McCain
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Senator Jeff Flake
United States Senate
413 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Impact of the Better Care Reconciliation Act on Pima County

Dear Senators McCain and Flake:

On June 20, 2017, the Pima County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 2017-43, which memorialized Pima County’s commitment to affordable and inclusive access to quality healthcare. The County is greatly concerned about the potential cost that would be incurred by the County if what is estimated to be nearly 100,000 Pima County residents lose their health insurance.

Arizona Governor Doug Ducey has provided information about the potential costs to Arizona of the federal healthcare reform bills. His Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCCS) now estimates the proposal before the United States Senate could increase Arizona’s costs by $7.1 billion between Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2026. As you are likely aware, counties in Arizona make fiscal contributions, as a local share, to pay for the cost of the State healthcare system. If the State is required to pay more, local government, specifically counties, will pay more. As Arizona’s second largest county, the proportional impact will be significant.

Of additional concern to Pima County is that proposed changes could take away preventive services from Medicare recipients and cost seniors thousands of dollars more each year for prescription drug coverage.

Pima County has long been supportive of federal plans that promote public health prevention goals, including access to free immunizations, tobacco cessation products and counseling; well-child visits; and screening mammograms and colonoscopies that could be in jeopardy under the proposal before the Senate.
The bill before you substantially alters the federal-state-local partnership for Medicaid and would shift significant healthcare costs to Pima County.

Pima County urges you to oppose the Better Care Reconciliation Act.

Respectfully,

Sharon Bronson, Chair  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

SB/mk

Enclosure

c: The Honorable Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors  
Chuck Huckelberry, Pima County Administrator  
Jan Lesher, Chief Deputy Pima County Administrator  
Dr. Francisco Garcia, Assistant Pima County Administrator for Community and Health Services and Chief Medical Officer
RESOLUTION 2017- 43

PIMA COUNTY RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND TO THE ENACTMENT OF THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

The Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona finds:

1. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has both provided expanded access to and improved healthcare for many of Pima County’s residents.

2. Repeal of the ACA could cause nearly 100,000 Pima County residents to lose their health insurance.

3. Many features of the ACA, such as prohibiting lifetime benefit caps, prohibiting gender discrimination, provision of care regardless of pre-existing conditions, and provision of benefits to children up to age 26 on their parents’ policies, benefit all Americans, including those whose insurance is not purchased on the Health Insurance Exchanges.

4. Repeal of the ACA would take away preventive services from Medicare recipients and reinstate the prescription drug coverage gap (the “donut hole”), thereby costing seniors thousands of dollars more each year.

5. The ACA allows many public health prevention goals, including access to free immunizations, tobacco cessation products and counseling, well-child visits, and screening mammograms and colonoscopies to be effectively met without co-pays or deductible through private health insurance.

6. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the ACA has helped reduce the federal deficit and extended the future solvency of Medicare; and repeal of the ACA would reverse these positive fiscal trends.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Pima County Board of Supervisors hereby:

1. Stands firmly committed to affordable and inclusive access to quality healthcare for all Pima County residents.

2. Calls on Arizona’s Congressional Delegation to vote against any repeal of the ACA unless and until it is replaced by another nationwide alternative with protections for the public commensurate with the goals of the ACA or a single-payer health insurance program that is adopted only after an extensive public review and comment period.
Passed and adopted this 20th day of June, 2017.

Sharon Borton  JUN 20 2017
Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST

Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Deputy County Attorney