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HOUSE AND SENATE PASS TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT, REPEALING A CRUCIAL PART OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND TRIGGERING AUTOMATIC CUTS

People with pre-existing conditions, including people with disabilities, will face higher premiums and millions will go without health insurance.

Washington, D.C (December 20, 2017)—The final version of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has now passed both the House and Senate. The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, a national legal advocacy organization advancing the rights of people with mental disabilities, condemns the passage of this final bill. “The bill repeals a crucial part of the Affordable Care Act that ensures protections for people with pre-existing conditions, including people with disabilities, and leaves millions without health insurance,” said Jennifer Mathis, Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy. “Because the tax cuts approved today by the House and Senate will decrease revenues and cause a massive increase to the budget deficit, the bill also triggers automatic cuts to vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities, social services and housing programs, and Medicare.”

“It is particularly frustrating that as members voted to add more than a trillion dollars to the deficit, they also are refusing to reauthorize the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which expired months ago,” said Bethany Lilly, Deputy Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy. “The same members who supported this tax bill have also said they plan to pay for this unnecessary trillion dollar addition to the federal deficit by cutting spending—spending on Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and other programs people with disabilities rely on to live independently in the community. We will be on alert next year for these threats.”

About The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law is a national legal advocacy organization protecting and advancing the rights of people with mental disabilities. The Center promotes laws and policies that enable people with mental disabilities to live independently in their own homes and communities, and to enjoy the same opportunities that everyone else does. For more information, visit www.bazelon.org.

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