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For Immediate Release

Statement from Lindy Kennedy, executive vice-president of the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida, on Sen. Nelson's Disaster Displacement Act

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., Nov. 2, 2017 - The Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida applauds Sen. Bill Nelson for filing the Disaster Displacement Act that would provide full federal funding of Medicaid coverage for displaced Hurricane Maria survivors. Florida's safety net and children's hospitals have welcomed with open arms many evacuees from Puerto Rico and U.S. territories impacted by the hurricane and support federal efforts to reimburse the cost of their medical care.

This enhanced funding will pay the federal and state share of Medicaid coverage for displaced Hurricane Maria survivors for two years. This will allow the state of Florida to provide Medicaid coverage to vulnerable hurricane survivors without depleting Florida's current Medicaid budget, which for the first year in some time is leveling off and not outpacing the growth in Florida's general revenue. For Medicaid services to Floridians already enrolled, the current 38 percent state share and 62 percent federal share will still be in place.

Hospitals on average lose 40 cents on every dollar of care provided to patients enrolled in Medicaid. It is our hope that the state of Florida will dedicate this new federal funding to patient care and improved access to health care by increasing reimbursement rates to safety net hospitals that are continually asked to do more with less.

After surviving the devastating storm, these patients, many of them children with life-threatening conditions, deserve access to the highest-quality care that Florida's safety net and children's hospitals offer.

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The Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida is a 14-member coalition of teaching, public, children's and regional perinatal intensive care hospitals that together make up only 10 percent of the state's hospitals, yet provide the majority of the state's highly specialized medical care, train tomorrow's doctors, and provide almost half of the Medicaid and charity care.

Teaching Hospitals

Broward Health

Jackson Health System

Mount Sinai Medical Center

Orlando Health

UF Health Shands Hospital

UF Health Jacksonville

Tampa General Hospital

Public Hospitals

Halifax Health

Lee Health

Memorial Healthcare System

Sarasota Memorial Health Care System

Children's Hospitals

Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital

Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Regional Perinatal Intensive Care Center

Sacred Heart Health System

Anthony Carvalho

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