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NJ's Largest Nursing Union to Address MacArthur Town Hall Rally on ACA Repeal

NJ's largest nursing union joined community residents at a rally at Congressman MacArthur's town hall in opposition to his support of the repeal of the Affordable Care Act that would make it harder and more expensive for those with pre-existing conditions to get and keep health care coverage— like pregnant women, diabetics, asthmatics and 52 million other Americans who have a chronic illness or health condition.

Claudia Storicks, a retired nurse and member of HPAE spoke: “That’s why nurses have joined in the fight to protect the affordable care act – and why we are speaking out at the town hall today. We are sorely disappointed in Congressman MacArthur’s mean-spirited amendment to the ACA that strips care from those who need it the most. It’s National Nurses Week, and as nurses, we are obligated to protect our patients – whether it is from short-cuts at the bedside or short-sighted policies in Congress. I was a nurse for 26 years, and then I was a patient. I know what it’s like to have good health coverage, and what it’s like to be without. Without the ACA, I could not have afforded my medications or follow-up care after I became disabled.”

“On behalf of the 13,000 members of the Health Professionals and Allied Employees, we are proud to join with NJ Citizen Action and community members in saying we won’t go back, we won’t give up, and we won’t stand for Congressional representatives who would force millions to go without health coverage – so that the rich can get a \$600 billion tax break,” said Storicks, a resident of Pemberton Township

“Nurses are on the frontlines in the debate over healthcare – we see firsthand what happens when patients delay or forego care because they can’t afford it. We saw the difference the Affordable Care Act made to so many patients in our communities, and we simply can’t go back. As

someone said recently, 'life is a pre-existing condition', and it is both cruel politics and bad public policy to put health coverage out of reach just when someone needs it the most. As part of a national union of 1.6 million educators and health professionals, we stand with our patients," commented Ann Twomey, President, HPAE/AFT, who was in Washington D.C., strategizing with other healthcare leaders about the campaign to protect the ACA.

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HPAE is an affiliate of the AFT, representing 1.6 million educators and health professionals. Randi Weingarten, president of AFT released this statement about the ACA repeal bill: "Let's be clear: This bill robs millions of Americans of essential benefits like maternity and pediatric care, makes deep cuts to Medicaid that disproportionately punish low-income Americans and special needs students, and maintains the excise tax on working families' group plans. And for the half of all Americans who obtain insurance through their employers, this bill puts them at risk of losing the current legal protections that cap out-of-pocket costs."