

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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If Virginia Ruling on Affordable Care Act Stands, “Women’s Health Will Suffer,” Ness Says

Statement of Debra L. Ness, President, National Partnership for Women & Families

“The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is an intricately crafted law, and each component is essential to the whole. Taking away the individual mandate is like pulling on a loose thread on a sweater – it threatens to unravel the whole piece.

We are convinced that Federal District Court Judge Henry Hudson erred today in his ruling and that, ultimately, it will not stand. But this decision is a somber reminder that the best interests of women, mothers and families can fall victim to politically motivated attacks.

The ACA put America’s – and Virginia’s – women one huge step closer to getting the health coverage and health care they need. We need the Affordable Care Act. Americans have been waiting for decades for just this kind of comprehensive health reform. We need to ban insurance companies from rescinding our coverage when we get sick. We need to prohibit restrictive caps on our coverage and end pre-existing condition exclusions for children. We need to make certain that women with pre-existing conditions who have been unable to find affordable coverage can do so through high-risk pools. We need to cover mammograms and pre-natal care. We need the new law’s prohibition on gender rating by insurers in small and individual markets.

Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli demonstrated callous indifference to the best interests of women in Virginia and across the nation by pursuing this case. Judge Hudson’s ruling gives him a temporary victory, but we expect it to be fleeting. This ruling would undermine the new law’s potential to deliver the affordable, quality, coordinated health care the nation urgently needs and it would cause women’s health to suffer. We expect it to be reversed. The nation will be better off when it is.”

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family.