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## **A Statement by Home Care Association of New York State President Joanne Cunningham on the Final 2011 State Budget**

“This budget is catastrophic for New York’s home care system. It will bring ruin to longstanding home care programs, allows unprecedented government intrusion into home care business operations on a scale unknown to any other area of health care, and it aims a half-billion dollars in unsustainable cuts at an already financially fragile home care service delivery system that is, ironically, saving hundreds of millions of Medicaid dollars to begin with.”

“Stunningly, some proposals in this budget don’t even save health care dollars but are merely designed to serve narrow agenda-driven interests at a half-billion-dollar expense to New York’s home care providers; the unfunded home care wage mandate in this budget is not only ill conceived but had no business in a process aimed at cutting Medicaid expenses. Similarly, entire home care programs under this budget face categorical extinction despite their proven success in saving millions of Medicaid dollars and despite the fact that the Governor’s alternatives show no evidence of cost-savings or patient benefit.”

“Knowing the state’s fiscal problems, New York’s home care community never expected to be shielded from cuts, but we also never expected to be disproportionately singled out by the Governor, nor did we expect to have our constructive cost-savings ideas shut out of the process. HCA’s good-faith efforts to advance hundreds of millions of dollars in sound reform and cost-savings proposals were altogether snubbed by the Cuomo administration right up through the eleventh hour of negotiations. This mirrors home care’s exclusion from the Governor’s Medicaid Redesign process, which targeted home care with a disproportionate \$1 billion package of cuts and mandates crafted based on the Governor’s arrangements with other stakeholders.”

“The consequences for patients – especially those with chronic conditions and special needs – are devastating. As a result of this budget, home care agencies will shut down and patients will require higher-cost services.”

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