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Contact: Roger L. Noyes (518) 810-0665  
(518) 275-6961 cell

## **A Statement by HCA President Joanne Cunningham On Home Care and the 2009-10 State Budget**

“The Legislature has adopted a State Budget that, without their intervention, would have decimated New York’s home care system. Thankfully Speaker Silver, Senate Majority Leader Smith, Assembly Health Committee Chairman Gottfried and Senate Health Committee Chairman Duane rejected many of the Governor’s cuts and destructive home care reform proposals.

“The Governor’s extremely damaging home care structural proposals should have never seen the light of day in the first place. Such misguided reform attempts would have dismantled New York’s home care system. Furthermore, since these proposals had little or nothing to do with controlling Medicaid costs, they were especially inappropriate at a time when fiscal priorities alone should have commanded attention.

“Unfortunately millions of dollars in destabilizing home care cuts remain in the final plan. These cuts will not only harm patient care but were completely avoidable since New York was provided billions of dollars in federal Medicaid relief this year – more than enough to avert all of the proposed health cuts – and since HCA had approached the Governor and Legislature to offer alternative proposals that would have substituted for destructive cuts.

“Added to the budget’s home care reimbursement cuts – which the Governor himself characterized as the largest cuts to home care in state history – is a tax on home care. The sad truth is that a portion of this tax will be imposed on out-of-pocket payments made by uninsured elderly and disabled home care patients.

“The opportunity remains for legislative leaders and the Governor to work with the home care community on embracing affirmative solutions for supporting New York’s home care delivery system.”

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