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Contact:
Ellen Kugler, Executive Director
703-444-0989
ellen@safetynetalliance.org

Hospitals Choose Rep. Kennedy for “Champion for Health Care Award”

(Washington, D.C.) The National Alliance of Safety-Net Hospitals has given Representative Joe Kennedy III (D-MA/4) its “Champion for Health Care Award” for his tireless advocacy of access to care for his constituents, the residents of Massachusetts, and all Americans.

As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Health Subcommittee, Representative Kennedy has introduced scores of bills to ensure access to care – and to ensure the ability of safety-net hospitals and other safety-net providers to serve their communities. Among them have been bills to ensure that behavioral health services are as accessible as physical health services, a vital need in the fight against opioid abuse. He also has introduced legislation to help slow the rise of prescription drug prices.

Representative Kennedy recently introduced legislation to delay Affordable Care Act-mandated cuts in Medicaid disproportionate share hospital payments (Medicaid DSH) that are made to hospitals that serve especially large numbers of low-income patients. Safety-net hospitals view these payments as an essential tool in serving their low-income patients. A strong supporter of Medicaid, Mr. Kennedy has advanced other legislation as well to help safety-net providers stretch their resources so they can better serve their communities.

“Representative Kennedy believes that access to quality health care is a right that belongs to every American,” said Keith Hovan, president of NASH. Hovan also is president and chief executive officer of the Southcoast Health System, which has facilities in Representative Kennedy’s district, including Charlton Memorial Hospital, in Fall River, and serves many of Mr. Kennedy’s constituents. “A strong and vocal supporter of making health care available to all, Representative Kennedy has fought to protect private safety-net hospitals from damaging cuts that would hinder our ability to care for our most vulnerable residents. We are incredibly grateful for his leadership.”

NASH gave the award to Representative Kennedy today during its “NASH Advocacy Day” in Washington, D.C.

The National Alliance of Safety-Net Hospitals advocates for adequate recognition and financing of private safety-net hospitals that serve America’s neediest communities.

Additional information about NASH can be found on the group’s web site at <https://safetynetalliance.org/>.

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