



## Statement

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### **AUCD HAILS COMMUNITY CHOICE ACT**

*Legislation would enhance community-based services and provide equal services access for people with disabilities and older Americans who choose to live in the community*

Silver Spring, MD — Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) today introduced the Community Choice Act of 2009. The bipartisan legislation would increase access to community-based services and other supports for Americans with disabilities and older Americans.

“AUCD has long advocated for reforming the institutional bias in the Medicaid program. Currently over two-thirds of Medicaid long-term care dollars are spent on institutional services, leaving few dollars for community-based services. There are hundreds of thousands of individuals with developmental and other disabilities on waiting lists for home and community based services and supports. Our policy should not favor institutions over home and community-based services. It should provide families and individuals with real choices regarding where and how services should be delivered,” said Michael Gamel-McCormick, AUCD President and Interim Dean, College of Human Services, Education and Public Policy at the University of Delaware.

The Community Choice Act provides individuals who are eligible for nursing home services or other institutional care equal access to community-based services and supports. An essential element of health care reform is ensuring that Americans have access to coverage that meets their care needs. For many individuals with disabilities and seniors long-term services and supports are a primary unmet care need. Long-Term services are essential to promoting health and preventing secondary conditions. The Community Choice will expand coverage of essential community-based services. AUCD looks forward to working with Congress to move this important legislation forward as part of health care reform.

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities, located in Silver Spring, MD, is a national, non-profit organization that promotes and supports the national network of interdisciplinary university centers advancing policy and practices through research, education and services for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families, and communities. For more information and a directory of Centers, please visit our website at [www.aucd.org](http://www.aucd.org).

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