



## Press Statement

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### Maryland Adopts Community First Choice, First Victory for Six by '15 Campaign

SILVER SPRING, MD (July 7, 2014) — Maryland has become the third state to receive approval from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to implement the Community First Choice Option, a Medicaid state plan option created by the Affordable Care Act to provide access to home and community-based services (HCBS) without a waiting list.

"We're proud to have our home state leading the nation in ending the institutional bias by implementing this program. It's a great first milestone for our campaign." said Andrew Imparato, Executive Director of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.

While most people with disabilities prefer to receive long-term care services in their homes and communities, the Medicaid program only guarantees coverage in institutions or nursing homes. Thousands of people across the US are on waiting lists for HCBS. The Community First Choice Option provides an enhanced federal matching rate for state Medicaid programs to include community services to all eligible beneficiaries without waiting lists. Maryland follows Oregon and California in implementing the option.

Maryland's approval also marks the first victory for the Six by '15 campaign – a joint effort of six major disability organizations to achieve six national goals by the end of 2015, a year which marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. One of the goals of the campaign is for six more states to implement the Community First Choice Option. Maryland is the first to be approved since the campaign began in early 2014. More information is available at <http://sixbyfifteen.org>.

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), located in Silver Spring, MD, promotes and supports a national network of interdisciplinary centers on disabilities. The members of AUCD represent every U.S. state and territory. AUCD and its members work to advance policy and practice through research, education, leadership, and services for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families, and communities. For more information, visit AUCD's website: [www.aucd.org](http://www.aucd.org).