FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Tuesday, March 15, 2011

CONTACT:  
Cathy Levine, 614.313.7478  
Col Owens, 513.300.3042

Governor Kasich’s Proposed Budget Moves Health Care in the Right Direction

This statement can be attributed to Col Owens and Cathy Levine, Co-Chairs of Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage in response to Governor Kasich’s proposed budget.

“Governor Kasich’s proposed Medicaid budget moves us in the right direction to dramatically change the way health care is delivered in Ohio. Under the Office of Health Transformation, the Medicaid reforms will improve care coordination by promoting health homes, integrate behavioral and physical health care, and modernize the health care payment system. While these reforms start with the Medicaid program, these changes will benefit the overall health care system.

The proposed changes will particularly help Ohioans with chronic conditions and children with disabilities who will benefit from coordinated care and integrated hospital, physician, and supportive services.

As the details of these concepts are rolled out in the next several days, we hope that the specifics support the broad goals of coordinating care and improving outcomes. As the state develops new models of care, it is critical that consumers have an organized voice in design and monitoring to ensure that these new models of care meet their needs.

We are concerned, however, that the amount of money taken out of the health care system—a total of $1.4 billion—could have unintended consequences that could harm vulnerable people.

We look forward to working with the Administration and lawmakers to improve the health care system in Ohio.”

Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage is a nonpartisan coalition unifying the diverse consumer voice with the goal of achieving affordable, high quality health care for all. Our membership includes AFSCME Council 8 AFL-CIO, American Cancer Society, Faith Community Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, National Alliance for Mental Illness of Ohio, National Multiple Sclerosis Society Ohio Chapters, Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans, Ohio Council of Churches, Progress Ohio, Service Employees International Union, Toledo Area Jobs with Justice, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1059, UHCAN Ohio, We Are The Uninsured, and We Believe Ohio.

###