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4300 Marsh Ridge Road • Suite 114 • Carrollton, TX 75010  
972.267.1111 • 972.267.3535 (fax) • www.alarryross.com

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Melany Ethridge 972.267.1111  
[melany@alarryross.com](mailto:melany@alarryross.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **JONI AND FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY CENTER TACKLES HEALTH CARE DEBATE: Ministry Wants to Ensure Care is not Rationed, Life Protected**

**WHAT:** As a ministry dedicated to supporting those with disabilities and those who can't speak for themselves, Joni and Friends International Disability Center encourages the public to get involved in the health care debate, to be informed about the issues and to do whatever can be done to ensure that no one is ever denied quality medical care or deprived of life against their will.

"In the current health care debate, it's clear that rationing of health care dollars is going to be unavoidable," said Joni and Friends President and COO Doug Mazza. "The administration and many in Congress submit that rationing should be based on how we can achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of people. This utilitarian approach to health care rationing places our society's weakest members at severe risk."

As the founder of Joni and Friends and a quadriplegic herself, Joni Eareckson Tada believes that there should be more time for public debate on the question of rationing before any law reaches the president's desk. "We believe this debate should be guided by the benchmark of human dignity, a concern for the weakest among us, and common sense undergirded by a moral foundation," Tada said.

**WHO:** Spokespersons include:

<b>Joni Eareckson Tada</b>	Author, disability advocate and founder of Joni and Friends International Disability Center. Injured in a diving accident in 1967, Tada is the longest living quadriplegic on record.
<b>Doug Mazza</b>	President and COO of Joni and Friends, Mazza has helped the ministry to expand greatly in recent years, serving thousands of more individuals with disabilities every year. He also speaks as the father of a profoundly-disabled son.
<b>Steve Bundy</b>	Bundy of the Joni and Friends Christian Institute on Disability, Steve also parents a disabled son, but even before his son's birth, was involved in ministry to the disability community, beginning the "In His Image" ministry at his church in Pasadena, Calif.

**Dr. Kathy McReynolds**

Ph.D. bio-ethicist and professor at Biola University in Southern California. Dr. McReynolds serves as the public policy director for the Joni and Friends Christian Institute on Disability. She earned her Ph.D. in ethics at USC, specializing in ethical issues and genetic enhancement research.

**WHEN &  
WHERE:**

**By appointment via phone and in studio from Los Angeles**

**DETAILS:**

To request an interview, please contact Melany Ethridge at [melany@alarryross.com](mailto:melany@alarryross.com) or 972.267.1111.