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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **NEW HEALTH CARE BILLS PROMPT QUESTIONS OF CONSCIENCE: Disability Advocates Are Concerned About Rationing by Category**

**WHAT:** As politicians continue to debate the new health care bills, religious organizations around the country express specific concerns regarding some of the language in the bill currently under discussion in the senate, and whether or not it truly serves the best interests of the American people. Disability advocates at Joni and Friends (JAF) Christian Institute on Disability (CID), first and foremost, question the decision-making authorities behind patient care. Issues they would discuss include:

- Vague language regarding gatekeepers and patient-care decision makers
- Comparative Effectiveness Research Center
- Absence of a conscience clause
- Physician requirement to perform abortions or other medical decisions that would not sustain life
- Provider integrity

Joni Eareckson Tada is the Founder and CEO of Joni and Friends and a signatory of the recently announced "Manhattan Declaration," which includes the following language expressing the attitude of Joni and Friends team regarding the bill. "We are especially troubled that in our nation today the lives of the unborn, the disabled and the elderly are severely threatened," and "The rights of conscience could be jeopardized by those who would use the instruments of coercion to compel persons of faith to compromise their deepest convictions."

**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>Dr. Kathy McReynolds</b>	Ph.D. bio-ethicist and professor at Biola University in southern California. Dr. McReynolds serves as the public policy director for the JAF 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.