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New York Report Chronicles ACA Implementation Progress Through Effective Leadership/Cooperation

Albany, NY — With the overall national experience in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) being uneven, often reflecting stark political divisions within states, the implementation of the ACA in New York State has been relatively smooth, according to the just released findings of researcher Sarah F. Liebschutz, a distinguished service professor emerita of the State University of New York (SUNY) and former chair of the political science department at SUNY Brockport.

Liebschutz's study is the latest in a series of more than 30 reports released through the efforts of the 40-state, 70-researcher ACA Implementation Network of the Rockefeller Institute of SUNY, the Brookings Institution and the Fels Institute of Government of the University of Pennsylvania.

According to the study, New York's success is attributable to the fact that "New York's leaders (executive and legislative) affirmed state options early and subsequently acted to improve access, quality, and cost savings. They were influenced by past experience and enhanced ACA implementation through partnerships with statewide, nonprofit organizations," the study concluded.

Liebschutz also discussed the significance of the addition of New York's Basic Health Plan (BHP) during the third open enrollment period. New York is now the nation's leading and largest BHP, an example of how New York's leaders used federal funds to take advantage of recent health system change opportunities.

Through the expansion of Medicaid eligibility and the establishment of the New York Health Benefit Exchange, known as the *NY State of Health*, the enrollment of insured New Yorkers increased by approximately 961,000 in the program's first year to more than 2.8 million in year three.

Thomas Gais, director of the Rockefeller Institute, commented on the report and the forum: "What I find impressive about New York's implementation of the ACA is its *integration* of several different programs — including Medicaid, Child Health Plus, the Qualified Health Plans, and the Essential Plan — into a wide-ranging yet accessible whole for New York residents seeking health care. The federal government may operate these as separate 'silos.' But New York has connected them for the sake of its people. That's federalism at its best."

Specifics of the New York implementation were discussed in a public event held at the Rockefeller Institute on June 6th.

To read the report, go to www.rockinst.org/ACA/states/New_York/2016-06-New_York_Individual_Report.pdf.

To view the video of the event, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPxbYpjb94Q.

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