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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2015

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**CHICAGO JOINS THE WHITE HOUSE'S HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
CHALLENGE AS PART OF ITS EFFORTS TO ENSURE RESIDENTS HAVE
ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE**

Building on Chicago's ongoing efforts to ensure that its residents have access to affordable healthcare coverage, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced at an event today with Senior Advisor to the President Valerie Jarrett that Chicago will participate in the White House's Healthy Communities Challenge—a national initiative designed to assist uninsured citizens across the country in accessing healthcare coverage afforded by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The City announces its participation in the Challenge during its annual open healthcare enrollment period for residents.

"The strength and future of Chicago is dependent upon the health and well-being of its residents," Mayor Emanuel said. "We want to get as many people enrolled in health care as possible because there is no reason why hardworking families should not have the medical coverage necessary to keep everyone in the household healthy and informed."

Since the ACA launch, 17.6 million Americans have gained health care coverage, and the nation's uninsured rate now stands at its lowest level ever. In Chicago, more than 280,000 residents have gained healthcare coverage since 2013. Over 125,000 have gained coverage through Marketplace health care enrollment, and over 155,000 residents have gained coverage through Medicaid.

There are still many individuals who are eligible for Marketplace coverage. In Chicago, approximately 125,000 residents who qualify still lack insurance.

"The Affordable Care Act is helping millions of Americans get the health insurance they need, but our work isn't done. That's why I'm here in Chicago today, to urge all Americans to go online or call for assistance to find the best health care coverage for themselves and their families. We are thrilled that Chicago is one of 20 communities participating in the President's Healthy Community Challenge to reduce their population of uninsured during

the current open enrollment period— and best of luck to my hometown!” said Valerie Jarrett

Thanks to the ACA, health care coverage is affordable. The average monthly premium in Chicago for the second-lowest cost silver plans will decrease by 10 percent from 2015 to 2016 before tax credits. And since shopping for the best plan is a healthy approach, there are eight issuers in Chicago who are offering individual health plans in the Marketplace in 2016.

The City of Chicago has undertaken efforts of its own to ensure all of its residents have access to affordable health care. In 2013, Mayor Emanuel and the Chicago Departments of Public Health launched the Enroll Chicago! initiative to engage and educate residents on accessible healthcare with the support of more than 40 community partners and multiple city agencies. Since the inception of Enroll!, more than 108 librarians have been trained on ACA and 100 events have been hosted--helping lead to residents enrolling in health insurance – many for the first time.

Enroll Chicago 2016 is now open through January 31, 2016. Chicago residents can visit the State of Illinois' website, www.getcoveredillinois.gov, for more information on opportunities under the ACA.

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