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House Health Innovation Subcommittee Supports House Bill 539 “An Act Relating to Hospice”

Tallahassee, Fla – Today, FHPCA’s House Bill 539- “An Act Relating to Hospices” passed the Florida House Health Innovation Subcommittee. This bill addresses quality measures, prescription drug disposal after a patient’s death, and palliative care services to non-hospice, seriously ill patients.

State Representative Gayle Harrell said, “This bill will provide a wonderful addition to the continuation of care that is available to all patients, especially those patients who face very significant illnesses.”

FHPCA President and CEO Paul Ledford said, “This bill makes very important changes that will translate into better care for both seriously ill and terminally ill patients. It also modernizes sections of the law to best meet the needs of survivors and caregivers. We are very appreciative to the members of the subcommittee for their support.”

Others who joined in support of HB 539 at the House Health Innovation Subcommittee were Community Hospice of Northeast Florida President and CEO Susan Ponder-Stansel, Harbor Palliative Care & Advanced Illness Management Chief Medical Officer Leonard Hock, D.O., Mike McQuone of the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops, American Cancer Society/Cancer Action Network Florida Government Relations Matt Jordan, National Association of Social Workers, Florida Chapter Executive Director Jim Akin.

Community Hospice of Northeast Florida President and CEO Susan Ponder-Stansel said, “This legislation brings additional resources to what is a growing need for palliative care in our state, particularly as we are looking at people living longer with chronic illnesses that cause them diminished quality of life. Hospice providers across the state thank the Florida House Health Innovation Subcommittee for supporting HB 539.”

Harbor Palliative Care & Advanced Illness Management Chief Medical Officer Leonard Hock, D.O “As a hospice physician it has become clear to me and to my

colleagues that the suffering from disease can become overwhelming to a patient far before they would be a candidate to be admitted to hospice care. This Bill is an opportunity to advance the comfort care and wishes of the families in Florida.”

Florida has 46 high quality hospice providers and the utilization of hospice care in the state is among the highest in the country. For more information on FHPCA’s 2017 Legislative Advocacy efforts, please click [HERE](#).

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About Florida Hospice & Palliative Care Association:

Florida Hospice & Palliative Care Association (FHPCA) is a not-for-profit, IRS Section 501(c)(3) organization representing hospice patients and families, hospice professionals and hospice providers. FHPCA strives to assure excellence in, and expand access to, hospice and palliative care, and advocates for the needs of those in the final stages of life.

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