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CONTACT: Sarah Wells, (202)332-2275, ext. 209, swells@theconsumervoice.org

**NATIONAL CONSUMER ORGANIZATION ANNOUNCES REORGANIZATION,
EXPANSION TO ACHIEVE ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE,
QUALITY LONG-TERM CARE**

WASHINGTON—(June 14, 2010)—The National Citizens’ Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) announces a reorganization and expansion of advocacy priorities for individuals needing long-term care at home, in assisted living facilities and in nursing homes, and will do so under its new name The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, using “Consumer Voice” as its shortened name.

The expansion of priorities, created through a recent seven-month strategic planning process funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies, includes enhancing advocacy work in nursing homes, becoming the consumer voice for at-home care and assisted living, building its grassroots network, carrying out a policy agenda focused on its current role in nursing homes as well as other care areas and expanding collaborative relationships.

“This is an exciting time for the Consumer Voice and the voices we represent in Washington,” said Consumer Voice Board President Norma Atteberry, RN. “This planning process has resulted in a multi-year roadmap to heighten our continued focus on quality care. While the Consumer Voice’s work has historically been in nursing homes, we’re expanding to meet changing needs for long-term care. We’re honored to be an advocate for consumers.”

According to the Consumer Voice, despite decades of laws, regulations and advocacy efforts, barriers continue to exist for individuals who seek consistent, quality care that provides high quality of life. These barriers include a lack of access to affordable, high-quality choices in nursing homes and unmet demand, limited access and inadequate government oversight in rapidly growing assisted living and at-home care settings; lack of consumer empowerment; and insufficient laws and regulations in assisted living and home care and weak enforcement in nursing homes.

The Consumer Voice is uniquely positioned to meet this need, according to Sarah Wells, executive director. The organization is widely recognized as the only national organization bringing consumers’ voices directly to federal policy discussions. The Consumer Voice was instrumental in passing the 1987 Nursing Home Reform Act, which created the framework for nursing-home regulation and consumer protection, and was a leader in the passage of the nursing-home transparency and elder justice provisions in the health care reform law.

Items on the organization’s policy agenda include the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act; implementation of long-term care provisions in the health care reform law, including nursing-home transparency, elder justice and criminal background checks on workers; development of policy on non-nursing-home settings, including assisted living; promoting a high-quality and effective long-term care workforce; strengthening oversight and enforcement; and promoting long-term care quality initiatives.

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization founded in 1975 by Elma L. Holder that advocates for quality care and quality of life for consumers in all long-term-care settings.

“As we celebrate our 35th anniversary as an organization, we encourage the media to utilize us as a resource on consumer perspectives and protections as well as other federal and state long-term care issues,” said Atteberry.

For more information, visit www.theconsumervoic.org.

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The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded as the National Citizens’ Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) in 1975 by Elma Holder. The organization represents the consumer voice at the national level for quality long-term care, services and supports by advocating for public policies that support quality care and quality of life responsive to consumers’ needs in all long-term-care settings; empowering and educating consumers and families with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for themselves; training and supporting individuals and groups that empower and advocate for consumers of long-term care; and promoting the critical role of direct-care workers and best practices in quality-care delivery.