

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Media Contact**

Tony Viardo  
Sr. Director, Communications  
Families USA  
(202) 258-8287  
tviardo@familiesusa.org

## **Families USA's Frederick Isasi Stepping Down As Executive Director**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Frederick Isasi, the second Executive Director in the 42-year history of Families USA, today announced that he is stepping down effective December 31, 2023. Isasi led Families USA for seven years, navigating it through many critical fights to protect health care, including unprecedented fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, and defending the Affordable Care Act (ACA) from existential threats like the "*repeal and replace*" movement and Medicaid work requirements.

"I came to Families USA at a critical time," Isasi said. "A powerful pivot has occurred within the organization and in the health care movement, and I am enormously proud to have been a part of this change. Beyond working to ensure adequate coverage for all, the movement is now holding our state and federal policy makers accountable for stewarding our health care resources more effectively; actively stopping corporate health care abuses; ensuring that health is equitable for all in our nation and finally addressing the underlying social drivers of health. For all the trillions of dollars spent on health care and the incredible creativity and ingenuity of our nation, all people should be able to achieve their best health possible."

Phil Villers, co-founder and now President Emeritus of Families USA said, "Over the 42 years since its founding, Families USA has played a successful leading role in promoting health policies that are helpful for consumers and help prevent cutbacks in public health programs. Frederick assumed the reins of Families USA when the foundations of the Affordable Care Act were under attack. He ably guided our work to ultimately defeat the '*repeal and replace*' efforts against the ACA. And he has been instrumental in leading the organization's continued growth and success for the last seven years."

Under Isasi's leadership, Families USA played a crucial role in moving our nation forward by leading in key initiatives such as:

- **Defending the Affordable Care Act from *repeal and replace*:** In collaboration with a coalition of national and state partners to stop 2017 efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act, helped to prevent the loss of coverage for 30 million people, protect one in

two adults with pre-existing medical conditions from discriminatory access to insurance, and preserve other critical protections of the law.

- **Banning Surprise Medical Billing:** More than 150 million people have received unexpected medical bills due largely to the lack of transparency in pricing for medical services. By leading the legislative enactment and regulatory implementation lobby campaign, Families USA is changing the unfair practices that saddle millions with unexpected medical debt.
- **Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiating Power:** There are 66 million people enrolled in Medicare—seniors and people with disabilities—who will see a reduction in prices for some of the costliest drugs that they rely on for their health. And for the first time, these people also receive free vaccinations, a total out-of-pocket cap on their Medicare drug spend of \$2000, and a cap of \$35 on insulin copays.
- **Hospital Pricing Transparency:** Working in a bipartisan way with the Republican and Democrat Administrations to require hospitals to post the prices of their services, Families USA is addressing a practice that costs the federal government \$200 billion a year. Since 2015, hospital prices have grown four times faster than our paychecks and hospitals have increased prices by 20 to 40 percent in communities after consolidation.
- **COVID Vaccine Equity:** The multitude of barriers that lead to worse health outcomes for Black and Latino communities in a typical year were exacerbated by COVID. Teaming up with a broad coalition of health equity advocates, Families USA connected state level advocates and government officials, and educated them about best practices in vaccine equity to ensure vaccine reaches vulnerable communities; and then advocated for strong adoption.
- **Medicaid Expansion in five states:** Working in collaboration with partners such as the Fairness Project, Families USA has fought to expand Medicaid coverage to 1.5 million people in Utah, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Missouri. Most recently, its efforts in North Carolina contributed to the state’s expansion of Medicaid, the first state in the Southeast to do so.

“We are grateful for Frederick Isasi’s investment as leader of the organization in challenging times,” said Sr. Simone Campbell, Chair of the Board of Families USA. “His leadership in the pandemic brought our organization through turbulent times while moving healthcare policy in a direction that benefits all in our nation. Frederick leaves us ready for the next step and we are excited to take it. As Families USA builds on the momentum from its first four decades of providing advocacy and coalition leadership to improve our healthcare system, we look forward to galvanizing the movement for health.”

The Families USA Board of Directors is conducting a national search for a new Executive Director. Inquiries should be directed to Deborah Bachrach, Vice Chair of Families USA, at [dbachrach@manatt.com](mailto:dbachrach@manatt.com).