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## **Georgia Watch's Berneta Haynes Honored as Families USA's Health Care Value Advocate of the Year**

Atlanta, GA (January 25, 2021) | Berneta Haynes, Senior Director of Policy and Access at Georgia Watch, has been recognized as Families USA's Health Care Value Advocate of the Year.

Haynes earned the award because of her exemplary work championing for better health and health care at Georgia Watch, a consumer advocacy organization focused on issues impacting Georgians' wallets and quality of life. She focuses on health care access and equity to help close opportunity gaps and promote economic mobility. Her work over the past year culminated in the successful passage of consumer protections for Georgians from surprise medical bills, in addition to other policy advancements in which she played a pivotal role.

"Berneta is a strong ally who is helping to level the playing field for Georgia residents," said Lisa Hunter, Families USA's senior director of partnerships. "Her legal advocacy work has helped ensure access to health care and clean energy to improve the health and financial well-being of low-income families and communities."

"I'm honored to accept this recognition from Families USA. In all that I do at Georgia Watch, I center equity and justice. Healthcare is an equity and justice issue," Hayes said. "Our fight to end surprise medical billing in Georgia paid off last year with the passage of the state's 'Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act,' and we couldn't have done it without the amazing leadership from our partners at Georgians for a Healthy Future. This award is a reminder that this work matters and that there's so much more to do to ensure equity and justice in healthcare!"

Each year during its Health Action Conference, Families USA honors state and community leaders who are advancing social justice through health care advocacy. Awards represent the organization's four focus areas: Health Equity, Health Care Value, Coverage, and Consumer Experience.



Founded in 2002, Georgia Watch is a statewide nonprofit organization advocating for consumers and working to give Georgians a voice in critical public policy forums. We educate the state's consumers on the healthcare, energy, civil justice and financial issues that impact the quality of their lives. In all that we do, we work to ensure equitable outcomes and justice for Georgia consumers.