



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

February 1, 2011

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, I strongly urge you to maintain support for efforts to improve and strengthen our nation's health care system by opposing any legislation before the Senate to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

CHA and its members are committed to creating a health care system that ensures everyone will receive the health care they need, when they need it. While no one piece of legislation is perfect, we believe many of the ACA provisions to strengthen our health care system and expand access and coverage to millions of families are essential and should remain in law. These include offering expanded private insurance coverage options through state-based initiatives to allow both flexibility and greater access to health care; federal tax credits for small businesses and low- and middle-income families, to make private insurance more affordable; provisions to expand coverage through the Medicaid program to help cover the most vulnerable populations; strong insurance reforms to remove the barriers that have kept many Americans from the affordable coverage they require; efforts to promote transparency, quality and greater efficiency in the health care delivery system; and provisions to help seniors, including the eventual closing of the "doughnut hole" in the Medicare prescription drug program.

Some of these beneficial provisions have already been put into place, such as the elimination of pre-existing condition exclusions for children; coverage for young adults up to age 26 through their parents' health plans; and important new provisions for Medicare beneficiaries, including coverage for preventive services. These are extremely important steps toward making our health care system more just and equitable. Repeal of this legislation would only return us to a situation in which millions of Americans are forced to go without adequate health coverage. In fact, just as these and other important provisions of the ACA are set to go into effect, with many more on the way, the number of uninsured has risen in our nation to over 50 million people. As safety net providers in many communities, we simply cannot afford to go backwards in the struggle to ensure accessible and affordable health care for everyone.

We urge your support for retention of these provisions, and request your help to ensure that these and other important measures in the law will move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Carol Keehan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC
President and CEO