



*We Will Empower Bold Change to Elevate
Human Flourishing.SM*

January 29, 2026

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA)—the national leadership organization representing more than 2,200 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics, and service providers— **I am writing to express our support for several provisions of the appropriations bill that extend expiring health programs and allocate funding for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor–HHS–Ed) for Fiscal Year 2026.**

We welcome the bipartisan decision to allow more time for discussion of the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. We hope this process leads to a resolution that works toward safety, addresses concerns around immigration enforcement, and upholds the life and inherent dignity of all people in our communities.

Catholic health care is the largest not-for-profit provider of health care services in the nation, providing acute care, skilled nursing, long-term care services as well as other services including hospice, home health, assisted living, and senior housing across our country. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are served by Catholic health care organizations. Last year, Catholic hospitals provided care to 1 in 7 patients, employed 750,000 people, and had more than 5 million admissions, including one million Medicaid admissions.

We support several provisions in the bipartisan legislation being considered by Congress, namely the following investments in public health and health care financing important to our members:

- **Medicaid and Medicare:** Prevents harmful reductions to the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) program through FY 2028 and extends critical Medicare programs—such as the Medicare-Dependent Hospital (MDH) program, the Low-Volume Hospital Adjustment, telehealth flexibilities, and the Acute Hospital Care at Home initiative—that are essential to maintaining access to care and financial stability for providers serving vulnerable populations.
- **Healthy Moms, Babies, and Families:** Strengthens maternal, infant, and child health through continued support for the *Preventing Maternal Deaths Act* and the *PREEMIE Reauthorization Act*, increased investment in the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, and sustained funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant and the Healthy Start Program.
- **Rural Health Support:** Invests in the vitality of rural communities by funding rural health initiatives, including rural telehealth programs, the Rural Health Outreach and Network Development Programs, and the Rural Hospital Flexibility Program, helping rural providers deliver high-quality care close to home for our rural populations.

- **Health Workforce Training and Support:** Bolsters the health care workforce through funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Title VII health professions and Title VIII nursing workforce development programs, as well as continued implementation of the *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act* to support health care workers' mental health and prevent burnout.
- **Care for Seniors, Aging Communities and Palliative Care:** Supports older adults and caregivers by funding the Administration for Community Living (ACL), advancing research on Alzheimer's disease and dementia, while strengthening community-based services and programs that promote independence and dignity for seniors and those needing palliative care.
- **Behavioral Health, Suicide Prevention, and Addiction Services:** Expands access to mental health and substance use services by funding the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant and the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), while sustaining funding for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.
- **Public Health Infrastructure and Preparedness:** Strengthens the nation's public health system by sustaining funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support disease surveillance, public health data modernization, chronic disease prevention, maternal and child health initiatives, tobacco prevention and emergency preparedness, helping state and local health departments prevent illness, respond to emerging threats, and protect community health. Additionally, we strongly support the continued funding on firearm injury research.
- **Hyde and Weldon Amendments:** Maintains the longstanding bipartisan Hyde and Weldon Amendments, which prevent taxpayer funding of abortion and protect health care providers from discrimination based on conscience, ensuring that Catholic health care ministries can continue to serve patients in fidelity to their mission while upholding our nation's commitment to religious freedom, pluralism, and conscience protections.

As Catholic health care providers, this legislation is a necessary federal counterpart to our work at the local level as we continue to care for the communities we are in. Aligned with our vision of empowering bold change to elevate human flourishing, CHA remains committed to collaborating with you on bipartisan policies that strengthen access to high-quality compassionate health care access and promote human dignity. We thank you for your leadership on behalf of all the communities we are privileged to serve.

Sincerely,


Sr. Mary Haddad, RSM
President and CEO