



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

February 9, 2021

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
1139 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,200 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, I am writing to express our support for several of the provisions being marked up by the Committee to address the pandemic and economic crisis. These legislative proposals align with many of our longstanding advocacy priorities and would bring immediate relief to individuals, families and the communities we serve.

CHA's *Vision for U.S. Health Care* establishes our principles for a just and equitable health care system and calls for health care to be available, affordable and accessible to everyone, paying special attention to poor and vulnerable individuals. The COVID-19 pandemic and negative economic consequences have disrupted health coverage and the financial well-being for millions of people. We believe the provisions being considered are critical steps toward improving the health and financial security faced by individuals, families and vulnerable communities during this unprecedented time.

We urge committee members to support the following proposed provisions that protect and expand health care coverage and access:

- Increasing the value and eligibility of premium tax subsidies in the Health Insurance Marketplaces while guaranteeing that no one will pay more than 8.5% of their income for health insurance; and
- Creating health care subsidies for those who are unemployed and ineligible for COBRA coverage.

Additionally, we support the following provisions that bolster tax credit and social safety net programs that will meet the needs of struggling families:

- Expanding several tax provisions to support families including the child tax credit, child and dependent tax credit and earned income tax credit;
- Extending and increasing the pandemic unemployment assistance program until August 29 of this year; and
- Providing substantial funding to immediately aid vulnerable families through the new Pandemic Emergency fund and bolstering the existing Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.

Lastly, we support provisions to address the safety of seniors and those who work in long-term care settings:

- Providing additional funding to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to carry out infection control support through quality improvement organizations; and
- Providing additional funding to states to deploy strike teams to assist facilities with the management and treatment of COVID-19 outbreaks in long-term care settings.

We urge bipartisan support for these provisions to protect and expand coverage, prevent further spread of the coronavirus and support vulnerable individuals, families and children. As we all work to heal and support our communities during this pandemic, we express our hope that Congress will move swiftly to approve legislation that can deliver the necessary resources to save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Mary Haddad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "M".

Sr. Mary Haddad, RSM
President and CEO

CC: Members of the House Ways and Means Committee