



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

October 16, 2023

The Honorable Dick Durbin
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Robin Kelly
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Durbin and Representative Kelly:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization representing more than 2,200 Catholic healthcare systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics, service providers, and organizations, I write to thank you for introducing the *CARE for Moms Act* and offer our support for this legislation.

Providing compassionate care for mothers and babies has long been an integral part of the founding ministries of Catholic health care, made up of women religious who were pioneers in the communities they served. The Catholic health care ministry, with its 665 hospitals and more than 700,000 full-time and part-time employees, continues to be on the frontlines and respond to community needs across our country, including maternal health services.

While great strides have been made over the past two centuries in the delivery of health care for women and infants, there is much more that needs to be done. Recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that maternal deaths in the U.S. during the past few years have increased by a dramatic 89%. The CDC also reports that up to 80 % of these maternal deaths are considered preventable. This maternal health crisis has also exposed glaring racial and ethnic disparities, particularly for black women who are dying at two to three times the rate of their white counterparts.

The *CARE for Moms Act* seeks to support the maternal health work force, promote access to prenatal and postpartum care and provide essential resources to providers in rural areas. These policy initiatives are a necessary federal counterpart to our work at the community level as we continue to advance maternal health equity.

As Catholic health care providers, we are committed to reducing health disparities, promoting health equity and ensuring that everyone in our nation has access to affordable health care. In light of our vision of empowering bold change to elevate human flourishing, CHA stands ready to continue working with you to advance this legislation. 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