



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

December 4, 2015

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Representative:

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 strong opposition to H.R. 3762, the Restoring Americans' Healthcare Freedom Reconciliation Act of 2015.

The greatest priority of the Catholic health ministry in the United States is now and always has been to ensure that all persons, regardless of age, income, residence, health and employment status or any other determining factor, have access to quality and affordable health care. We have supported many legislative efforts including the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to help move our nation further towards that goal. And while we acknowledge that any piece of legislation including the ACA has room for improvement, one factor must be first and foremost in any subsequent effort to change or amend the current law—that it does not lead to the loss of coverage for anyone.

H.R. 3762 sets an extremely dangerous precedent by yanking coverage from millions of newly insured Americans, and set our nation on a backwards course in the struggle to achieve health care for all. According to the recent score by the Congressional Budget Office, the bill as originally passed in the House would increase the number of uninsured by 16 million people. Additionally, the subsequent inclusion of such measures as taking away insurance subsidies and revoking the Medicaid expansion would increase the number of uninsured by an even greater and unthinkable amount. Over 15 million men, women and children are eligible for Medicaid in those states that currently participate in the expansion. These are the poorest and most vulnerable among us, people who because of their condition are often in dire need of health services. Voting to take that coverage away, with no alternative to replace it, would say to them that their health and their very lives are of no consequence.

While we understand that the president has threatened to veto this bill, we nevertheless urge you to oppose it. The messages it sends, that our nation would willingly move backwards in the fight for greater health care coverage and that some of our citizens' health matters less than others, have no place in a moral and just society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sr. Carol Keehan".

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC
President and CEO