

February 27, 2008

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510



Dear Senator Bingaman:

On behalf of The Catholic Health Association, the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care sponsors, systems, hospitals, facilities, and related organizations, I am writing to thank you for sponsoring The Public and Teaching Hospital Moratorium Act, H.R. 3533 & S. 2460. Your legislation would extend for one year the moratorium preventing the Administration from implementing two Medicaid regulations to limit government providers to cost reimbursement and to cut Medicaid Graduate Medical Education (GME) payments.

The moratorium blocks the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services from implementing the cost limit rule finalized in May that would have eliminated nearly \$5 billion in Medicaid funding for safety net hospitals across the country over the next 5 years. The moratorium also prevents CMS from moving forward with the proposed rule released May 23 to eliminate Medicaid GME payments for direct medical services that physicians in training provide to Medicaid patients.

Medicaid is a primary funding source for America's safety net institutions, including many Catholic hospitals that serve a disproportionate share of the low-income, uninsured, and underinsured in their communities every day. Cuts of this magnitude will have a dramatic effect on our ability to ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries receive the care and services they so critical need.

The mission of the Catholic health ministry, calls us to be distinguished through "service to and advocacy for those people whose social condition puts them at the margins of our society and makes them particularly vulnerable to discrimination." Preserving and strengthening programs like Medicaid is just one facet of the Catholic health ministry's mission and an important step in working toward a future of accessible and affordable health care for all.

The Public and Teaching Hospital Moratorium Act would ensure the ability of safe net hospitals to continue to provide needed care to the most vulnerable in our communities, and we thank you again for supporting this important effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Rodgers".

Michael Rodgers
Senior V.P. Advocacy and Public Policy

Cc: Trudy Vincent

WASHINGTON OFFICE

1875 Eye Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20006-5409

Phone 202-296-3993
Fax 202-296-3997

www.chausa.org