

December 22, 2008

The Honorable Herb Kohl
Chairman
Special Committee on Aging
SD G 31
Washington, DC 20510



Dear Senator Kohl:

The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), representing Catholic sponsored hospitals, systems, long term care facilities and community based services, congratulates you on your proposal, "Retooling the Health Care Workforce for an Aging America Act."

CHA looks forward to seeing and supporting the legislation once it is introduced.

Our hospitals, nursing homes and other health care organizations serve an increasingly elderly, frail and chronically ill population. Providing competent and compassionate care - which is the right of all we serve - requires professionals who have specialized training in geriatrics and gerontology. We know firsthand that there is an inadequate supply of competently trained staff to serve our patients' and residents' special needs.

Your proposed bill would address this challenge by establishing training centers and programs, supporting students and faculty, setting up demonstrations and directing targeted research.

This, we believe is the right prescription for workforce problems we face.

When the new Congress convenes, we look forward to working with you and your staff to encourage passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Michael Rodgers
Senior Vice President, Advocacy & Public Policy