

**THE  
CATHOLIC HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION**  
OF THE UNITED STATES



February 8, 2005  
The Honorable Gordon Smith  
Chairman  
Special Committee on Aging  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Smith:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care sponsors, systems, facilities, and related organizations, I am writing to express our strong support for the "Bipartisan Commission on Medicaid Act of 2005."

As you know, Medicaid provides crucial services to over 50 million low-income children and pregnant women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Many of these individuals receive care in Catholic hospitals and Catholic long-term care facilities. Without a strong and vibrant Medicaid program, the number of uninsured individuals in the United States would be dramatically worse. In light of the critical role that Medicaid plays in the health of our nation, we believe that it is important to undertake a comprehensive review of the program before making any dramatic changes. To do otherwise could further unravel an already frail health care safety net.

For that reason, we are pleased to offer our support for your legislation. By assembling a 23-member commission to undertake a thorough review of the Medicaid program, your legislation can help ensure that Medicaid continues to play a key role in the health care safety net for years to come. We are particularly pleased that the commission would be comprised in part from important stakeholders in the Medicaid program, including representation from the health care provider community and advocates for Medicaid beneficiaries.

We are grateful for your continued efforts in support of the Medicaid program. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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

Michael Rodgers  
Vice President, Advocacy and Public Policy

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