

February 11, 2008



The Honorable John E. Sununu
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sununu:

Thank you for your leadership in sponsoring the bipartisan bill S. 400, "Michelle's Law," to make sure that college students can take a leave of absence to address serious medical problems without losing their health care coverage. As you have pointed out, students covered under their parents' health insurance policies often lose their status as a full time student – and therefore their insurance coverage – when they take a medical leave of absence from their studies. Your legislation would change that, by requiring federally-regulated health plans to continue covering students on medical leave for a year.

The Catholic Health Association believes the inherent dignity of the human person, created in the image of God, demands that everyone have access to the health care they need. One's ability to get health care should not turn on age, race, financial means – or student status. We are pleased to support your important legislation to make sure that seriously ill students can get the care they need when they need it, without jeopardizing their health, their education or their family's finances.

CHA and its members have recently developed *Our Vision for U.S. Health Care*, outlining the core values and principles that we believe should guide broader reform of our health care system. I have taken the liberty of enclosing our *Vision* document.

Once again, thank you for championing this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Carol Keehan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC
President & CEO