



*A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care*

February 15, 2011

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, would like to urge you to preserve our nation's moral commitment to take care of the least among us as you produce legislation to fund the federal government for the remainder of this fiscal year as well as the next.

As a vital part of the nation's safety net, the Catholic health ministry provides services across the continuum of care throughout the nation to patients of all ages, races, religious beliefs and socio-economic situations. Our ministry operates on the foundations of the religious values nurtured and cultivated over the years since the first Catholic religious congregations began to serve the poor and vulnerable in our nation. Our concern for those we serve is not limited to the time they spend in our care—we also know from experience that many factors continue to influence their ability to maintain good health, including proper nutrition, housing and other daily needs. That is why we are troubled by efforts to slash programs that will hamper not only the provision of health care to these populations but also drastically reduce their ability to be healthy and active participants in our society. While we certainly recognize the need to address the budgetary pressures facing the federal government, we must point out that it was not the spending on our already too-fragile safety net programs that caused the budget crisis, and attempting to balance the budget on the backs of the poor and vulnerable will only diminish that effort.

We do look forward to working with you and all members of Congress to find ways to address the budget deficit that do not harm those who need our help and support the most, and urge you to ensure that our spending priorities adequately reflect that commitment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Carol Keehan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC  
President and CEO