



A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care

Legislation to Address “Surprise” Medical Billing

Statement by Sister Mary Haddad, RSM, President & Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA)

The Catholic Health Association of the U.S. and our members firmly support efforts to protect patients from receiving a surprise medical bill when they have unavoidable encounters with an out-of-network hospital emergency department or with providers in an in-network hospital. However, we are opposed to proposals that resolve payment issues through a statutory rate setting methodology based on an insurer-based benchmark payment. Such an approach creates a long-term disincentive for insurers to negotiate in-network contracts with hospitals as the default would be a benchmark rate. This creates a disincentive for health plans to build strong provider networks and leads to reduced in-network access to health care services for consumers, as well as jeopardizing small and rural hospital viability due to losses of in-network insurance contracts. We appreciate Congress working hard to solve this problem and protect patients, but urge them not to use rate-setting to do so.