



United States Conference
of Catholic Bishops
Domestic Justice and
Human Development



February 27, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Thune, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the U.S., Catholic Charities USA, and the United States Conference on Catholic Bishops, we urge you to protect and strengthen the Medicaid program—a vital lifeline for nearly 80 million low-income families, mothers, children, elderly, disabled individuals, the unhoused, and working people across our nation. Medicaid is also a concrete example of our nation's commitment to supporting mothers and protecting life by paying for 41% of all births and ensuring care for moms and babies both before and after birth. As you begin considerations for a Budget Reconciliation package, it is vital that social safety net programs like Medicaid are protected and strengthened for the most vulnerable in our society.

The Catholic Church teaches that human life is sacred, and all people have inherent dignity and worth. As Catholic bishops and organizations that provide health care and social services on behalf of the Church, we firmly believe that all people have the right to those necessities needed to live, found a family and flourish.¹ It is in this reality that we recognize that the right to health care is a fundamental necessity for the preservation of life and human flourishing.² As Pope Francis, reminds us, “health is not a luxury, it is for all.”³

For more than 100 years our organizations have worked to make this Gospel calling a reality. As such, our organizations serve our communities through more than 2,000 Catholic hospitals, long-term care facilities and other health related organizations. While at the same time serving more than 15 million low-income and people in need across the United States through our charitable efforts in communities. In addition, our organizations provide a tangible offer of hope, comfort and care for mothers and their babies, before and after birth, through our maternal health and social service programs.

¹ Pope Leo XIII, *"Rerum Novarum – Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII on the Conditions of Labor"* (1891), 44. Available at https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html

² Pope John Paul II, *Speech of the Holy Father John Paul II To the Congress of the Catholic Doctors*, (7 July 2000), 3, available at https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2000/jul-sep/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20000707_catholic-doctors.html

³ Pope Francis, *Address to representatives of the National Federation of the Associations of Medical Radiology Health Technicians and Technical, Rehabilitation and Prevention Health Professions*, (16 January 2023), available at <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2023/january/documents/20230116-federazione-tecnici-sanitari.html>

Caring for those most in need in our society is not something that Catholic and all charitable organizations can do alone. This is why we need policies which ensure that low-income and vulnerable people can afford health care coverage and have the support they need. Programs like Medicaid embody our collective commitment to the common good, solidarity, and the preferential option for those who are poor and vulnerable. Weakening Medicaid through structural changes, such as per capita caps or block grants, would undermine these values and risk leaving millions without access to essential health services. Furthermore, policies like work reporting requirements have shown clear evidence of creating artificial barriers to care, generating paper work and bureaucracy while doing little to support people looking for work.⁴ These requirements also fail to recognize that most people on Medicaid already work and ignore the realities of low-wage work, caregiving responsibilities, and health limitations, and studies have shown they frequently result in loss of coverage for eligible individuals, including children.⁵

The same belief in the sanctity of human life that impels our support for health care for all informs our conviction that health care must be life-affirming. Women's health care providers should thus offer such support for both mothers in need and their unborn children. We support prohibitions on federal funding of abortions, efforts to protect taxpayers from subsidizing the abortion industry, and ensuring that expecting mothers have the opportunity to obtain life-affirming health care from providers who do not promote abortion.

As you address reconciliation priorities, we urge you to prioritize those most in need and working families and protect the Medicaid program. As Pope Francis reminds us "[A] society truly welcomes life when it recognizes that it is also precious in old age, in disability, in serious illness and even when it is fading; when it teaches that the call to human fulfillment does not exclude suffering; indeed, when it teaches its members to see in the sick and suffering a gift for the entire community, a presence that summons them to solidarity and responsibility."

We stand ready to work with you on these efforts so that our nation can ensure that ready to work with you in creating policies directed at improving health for all to flourish.

Thank you for your consideration,

Most Reverend Borys Gudziak
Archbishop of Ukrainian Catholic
Archeparchy of Philadelphia
Chairman, Committee on Domestic
Justice and Human Development
United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops

Kerry Alys Robinson
President & CEO
Catholic Charities USA

Sister Mary Haddad, RSM
President and CEO
Catholic Health Association
of the United States

⁴ Folse M, Bridges J, DiGiorgio A. "How Will Medicaid Work Requirements Affect American Healthcare? A Look at What Past and Present Policy Tells Us". Inquiry. 2024 Jan-Dec;61:469580241251935. doi: 10.1177/00469580241251935. PMID: 38785255; PMCID: PMC11127572, available at <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11127572/>. See also, CBOS Estimate of the Budgetary Effects of Medicaid Work requirements under H.R. 2811, the Limit, Save, Grow Act of 2023, (26, April 2023), available at <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2023-04/59109-Pallone.pdf>

⁵ Kaiser Family Foundation. "Understanding the Intersection of Medicaid and Work: An Update." *Kaiser Family Foundation*, 7 Dec. 2023, www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/understanding-the-intersection-of-medicaid-and-work-an-update/.