



*A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care*

May 16, 2019

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,200 Catholic hospitals, nursing homes, indigent care clinics, long-term care facilities, systems, sponsors, and related organizations serving the full continuum of health care across our nation, I am writing to express our support for HR 987, the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act.

As the healing ministry of the Catholic Church, CHA's utmost priority is improving access to health care for everyone in our nation, particularly for those who have no access at all and those who still do not have access to the full spectrum of the care they need. We believe HR 987 will take several important steps toward that goal with measures to lower the costs of prescription drugs and to strengthen several provisions under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). We applaud the legislation's measures to restore funding for education and outreach efforts including Navigators to support ACA enrollment efforts. This is vitally important for everyone who relies upon the health care exchanges under the ACA, and particularly so for those who are new to the system and those who reside in remote areas with little or no access to enrollment and coverage information.

We also support the legislation's prohibition on short-term, limited duration health plans. These plans were not meant to and do not provide the meaningful, long-term coverage that most Americans need to stay healthy. They also are allowed to freely discriminate based on age and pre-existing conditions. Allowing them as a substitute for full coverage in the exchanges would take many families and individuals back to situations prior to the ACA in which substandard plans failed to cover necessary services and imperiled their health and finances.

Lastly, we commend the legislation's measures to help lower the cost of prescription drugs, including those to end "pay-for-delay" agreements that have kept lower-priced generics from entering the market and raised overall drug spending. Prescription drugs play a vital role in maintaining the health of millions of Americans and should be made as accessible and affordable as possible.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our support for HR 987, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

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