



Working to Reduce Poverty in America

May 7, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee Labor, Health Human  
Services, Education  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee Labor, Health Human  
Services, Education  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chair  
Charles Cornelio

President & CEO  
Sr. Donna Markham OP, PhD

Vice Chair  
Robert McCann

Secretary  
Martina O'Sullivan

Treasurer  
Michael Connelly

Dear Senators Blunt and Murray:

On behalf of Catholic Charities USA, I respectfully request that as you consider the fiscal year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill, you allocate robust funding for critical programs that serve persons and families who are poor and vulnerable.

In the U.S. and its Territories, there are 167 Catholic Charities member agencies that last year served more than 250,000 people via health-related programs, including insurance enrollment assistance, clinic visits and prescription drug services. Catholic Charities agencies also provided access to mental health programs for nearly 200,000 people.

Catholic Charities continues to devise more effective and efficient ways to serve the health, social welfare and educational needs of individuals and families living in poverty. Catholic Charities agencies serve all clients in accordance with their inherent dignity, and any appropriations bill should preserve the freedom of these agencies to serve in conformity with our beliefs.

As you consider appropriation allocations, meaningful funding should remain a priority for the following programs:

**The Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) Program** under the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) provides custody and health care for immigrant children brought to the United States. Providing robust funding is critical for the sufficient care of children, and it mitigates some of the future trauma they might face. Catholic Charities witnesses firsthand the physical and psychological impacts facing these children and their families. The humanitarian crisis at the border warrants additional funds amounting to over \$1.3 billion to meet the basic needs of these children.

**Head Start** cultivates cognitive, social, and emotional development for low-income children from birth to age five. Head Start is an investment in the future of our country's children and a pathway to reducing generational poverty.



2050 Ballenger Avenue, Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314 | Phone: 703-549-1390 | Fax: 703-549-1656  
[www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org)

The **Social Services Block Grant** provides social service agencies the necessary financial resources for programs that promote self-sufficiency. The flexibility of the program is crucial for states and local leaders to determine the best way to address the needs in their communities. Continued federal support for this program is critical for low-income communities.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families** (TANF) remains a critical program for states to target the greatest areas of need and provide families the funds and programs that help them find jobs. Although the program requires structural changes to focus on providing more families with access to the funds, it still remains a key program to addressing poverty.

The **Foster Care Title IV-E** program enables foster care providers to obtain the required resources for daily care, staff training and the recruitment of foster and adoptive parents. Providing children in foster care a safe and stable environment puts the child at the center of the care.

The health and wellbeing of our communities requires bipartisan solutions, and Catholic Charities USA remains committed to working with Congress to solve these problems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donna J. Markham, OP, Ph.D." The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sr. Donna Markham OP, Ph.D.  
President & CEO  
Catholic Charities USA



Working to Reduce Poverty in America

May 7, 2019

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee Labor, Health Human  
Services, Education  
U.S House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee Labor, Health Human  
Services, Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Charles Cornelio

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