



Working to Reduce Poverty in America

March 14, 2019

The Honorable Michael Enzi  
Chairman  
Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

I write to you today on behalf of Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), urging you to come together to find a bipartisan solutions that avoids sequester cuts and gives priority to programs that support poor and vulnerable families.

CCUSA the national office for the 167 Catholic Charities agencies across all fifty states and the U.S. territories. Collectively, these agencies served over 10 million people struggling with the effects of poverty last year. Including providing meals to 4.7 million people, assist over a quarter million people with health care needs and operate over 35,000 unites of permanent housing. These agencies first hand that even in a strong economy 39.7 million people remain mired in poverty.

Without a bipartisan solution which addresses the sequester caps, programs which help poor and vulnerable families could be cut by as much as \$55 billion dollars. A strong economy is not the time to pull back from prioritizing the poor and working class. Now is the time for needed investment to ensure we end the generational cycle of poverty and provide working families with a life-line for long term support. Now is the time to address the challenges of chronic homelessness, health care costs and housing by investing in [healthy housing](#) across our country and now is the time to invest in access to affordable child care so parents can support their families.

We remain dedicated to finding pragmatic solutions to eradicating poverty in America, but we cannot do it alone. Our work can never fully replace the need of a compassionate government committed to ending poverty. However, together we can make real and lasting differences in our community. Therefore as you discuss the FY 2020 budget I urge you to stand together with Catholic Charities and other organizations which work each day to provide the faces of people in need with a helping hand.

Our nation's budget represents a values document. It represents not only what our nation values economically, but it reflects the values of who and what we want to invest in. This is a pivotal moment to unite and find bipartisan solutions that avoid sequester and give priority to programs that support poor and vulnerable families. CCUSA remains committed to helping our country achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

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

Chair of the Board  
Charles Cornelio

Vice Chair  
Robert McCann

Secretary  
Martina O'Sullivan

Treasurer  
Michael Connelly

President & CEO  
Sr. Donna Markham OP, PhD

