



*Working to Reduce Poverty in America.*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Joint Catholic Statement on the Medicaid Healthy Adult Opportunity (HAO) Demonstration**

Alexandria, Va. (January 31, 2020) –The Catholic Health Association of the United States, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Domestic Justice and Human Development Committee and Catholic Charities USA express our deep opposition to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ proposal to cap or block grant funding for the Medicaid expansion population.

It is unacceptable for the federal government to walk away from its shared commitment under the Medicaid program to ensure care for all low-income and vulnerable individuals in our country. As these individuals are the least able to afford health care, it is wrong to limit the federal financial contribution as well as allow low-income individuals to receive less coverage in the name of “flexibility”.

Catholic social teaching holds that each person is created in the image of God; that each human life is sacred and possesses inalienable worth; and that health care is essential to promoting and protecting the inherent dignity of every person. Ensuring access to health care is essential to human flourishing and we must especially protect low-income individuals and families.

The federal government must not encourage the capping of federal Medicaid dollars and allow major reductions in benefits and coverage for vulnerable individuals and families, as is spelled out in the “Healthy Adult Opportunity” demonstration. Eliminating the federal government’s shared commitment with the states under Medicaid will simply reduce federal payments and shift costs onto states, health providers, charitable organizations and beneficiaries. This is not the basis for a sound effort to improve the health of those in need but is instead a giant step backwards from the goal of accessible and affordable health care for all.

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