

September 14, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Alexander, and Ranking Member Murray:

We write to you as religious organizations, congregational denominations, and faith traditions about the need to take quick, bipartisan action to stabilize the health insurance markets. Our scriptures affirm our moral responsibility to ensure all may live with dignity and the opportunity to recognize their full potential. Access to affordable, quality health care should not and cannot be a privilege; it is a requirement rooted in faith to protect the life and dignity of every person.

First and foremost, thank you for taking a bipartisan approach to this issue. It is past time Congress move away from the partisanship and divisiveness that has plagued this issue and instead move forward in a collaborative and bipartisan manner. The health insurance markets are facing immediate stability and affordability problems. We call on Congress to quickly pass a bipartisan bill that provides some immediate stability to the health insurance markets. Thus, we urge you to:

- (1) Continue the Cost Sharing Reductions for at least two years to help provide multi-year stability. These payments are crucial for helping people with low-incomes afford copayments, deductibles, and other health care expenses and should be a bipartisan priority; and
- (2) Ensure that any additional flexibility around 1332 waivers does not undermine key consumer protections, which ensure that coverage is at least as comprehensive and affordable as coverage absent the waiver and that as many people are covered; and
- (3) Not include any changes to Medicaid in these negotiations.

We welcome the constructive conversations happening across the aisle and the bipartisan hearings taking place in the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. We applaud the bipartisan negotiations, and we seek to support those efforts in any way possible. We are praying for your success.

Sincerely,

American Muslim Health Professionals

Bread for the World

Disciples Center for Public Witness

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Faith that Heals Ministries, Tennessee Conference United Methodist Church

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.

Islamic Society of North America

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Methodist Federation for Social Action

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

National Council of Churches

National Council of Jewish Women, Inc.

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

Pax Christi USA

PC(USA) Office of Public Witness

The Episcopal Church

Union for Reform Judaism

Unitarian Universalist Association

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society

CC: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions