



## United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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September 13, 2021

Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

In advance of your markup of the Build Back Better Act, we write to implore you to reject provisions that would expand taxpayer funding of abortion, and to urge you in the strongest possible terms to apply the longstanding Hyde Amendment principle to all health spending so that no public funds are used for the deliberate destruction of unborn human life.

Last week, we joined three of our brother bishops who chair policy committees with U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in [writing to Congress](#) to encourage a reconciliation bill that helps people on the margins of society, strengthens families, protects religious freedom, promotes care for creation, and respects the rights and dignity of every human life. There are many provisions related to healthcare in the package before you that we support, including the extension of Medicaid postpartum coverage to 12 months and other investments to address the high rates of preventable maternal deaths in the United States, expanded access to in-home care for family members, support for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and pre-release Medicaid coverage for returning citizens. We also support the goal of ensuring everyone has access to truly affordable, comprehensive, and high-quality healthcare that promotes human life and dignity. There are other areas of interest and likely support in this package as highlighted in the September 7 letter, such as environmental protections.

However, the legislation that the House Committee on Energy and Commerce is preparing to markup contains multiple provisions that would expand taxpayer funding of abortion. For example, Subtitle F appears to provide unlimited funding for abortion on demand (with no cost-sharing) for low-income women in Medicaid non-expansion states like Texas in 2024 (page 6-8). And Subtitle G proposes a Medicaid-like program in non-expansion states with no Hyde Amendment protections.

We bishops have been resolute in our insistence that no taxpayer funding go to abortions. Abortion directly and purposefully takes the life of an innocent person and is the antithesis of health care. No federal proposal to support individuals needing affordable health care coverage should compel Americans to pay for the destruction of human life through their tax dollars.

Therefore, we urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject funding streams that would pay for abortion, and to ensure that the Hyde Amendment principle governs health care funding being contemplated in the Build Back Better Act. We reiterate what our brother bishops and we wrote last week: it would be a calamity if the important and life affirming provisions in this bill that we support were accompanied by provisions facilitating and funding the destruction

of unborn human life. If these provisions remain unchanged and the Build Back Better Act expands taxpayer funding of abortion, the USCCB will oppose it.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joseph F. Naumann in black ink, starting with a cross and the name 'Joseph F. Naumann'.

Most Reverend Joseph F. Naumann  
Archbishop of Kansas City, KS  
Chairman, Committee on Pro-Life Activities

Handwritten signature of Paul S. Coakley in black ink, starting with a cross and the name 'Paul S. Coakley'.

Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley  
Archbishop of Oklahoma City  
Chairman, Committee on Domestic Justice  
and Human Development