



December 7, 2009

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the 33 million Hispanic Catholics in the United States. By virtue of this letter we wish to voice our strong position of support for health care policies that include changes that are absolutely essential to a moral and ethical health care system for the protection of life, for human dignity, and respect of consciences for all.

On behalf of our Latino constituency, who make up 35% of the Catholic Church in the US, we are asking you to keep in place the longstanding and widely supported federal policy against government funding of health coverage that includes elective abortions -- a policy upheld in all health programs covered by the Hyde Amendment, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program. Such a policy would be in fulfillment of the president's promise that "no federal dollars will be used to fund abortions." This is a promise that must be kept.

Catholic Hispanics overwhelmingly support a healthcare policy that addresses our priorities on federally funded abortion, conscience protection, affordability, and fair treatment of immigrants. We believe genuine health care reform must protect our human life and our dignity, not threaten us, especially for the most marginalized and the voiceless. We must respect the consciences of providers, taxpayers, and others, not violate them. Universal coverage should be just that – universal - and it should not be denied to those in need because of their condition, age, where they come from or when they arrived here.

It is with great resolve and commitment that we urge you, in the strongest possible measure, to uphold these fundamental principles as an absolute moral imperative.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Aguirre President/CEO