

INTERFAITH STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:

Protecting Medicaid and Medicare

Our organizations, as well as people of faith throughout our society, strongly support Medicaid and Medicare. In the faith community, we are often the first to witness need and distress from all causes. As providers of services and care, both physical and spiritual, our members, congregations and institutions, including religiously affiliated health care providers, are very familiar with the importance of Medicaid and Medicare. We fully recognize that:

- Medicaid is the only program that provides comprehensive health coverage to low-income women, men, and children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Medicaid's reach into every aspect of health care at every stage of life is remarkable, from the program's role in paying for nearly 40% of all live births to its role in funding the long-term care of seven out of 10 nursing home residents.
- Medicare is the primary source of health insurance for our nation's seniors. Coupled with Medicaid for seniors with low incomes, Medicare ensures that our seniors receive the health care they need.

In deliberations about how we address the competing priorities and needs of all those who live in the United States, we call upon our elected leaders to consider the following shared interfaith principles which inform our support for Medicaid and Medicare:

- As people of faith, we envision a society where each person is afforded health, wholeness and human dignity.
- All individuals, regardless of their age, income, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, geography, employment status, or health status, deserve equal access to quality, affordable, inclusive and accountable health care. Reducing health care options for some based on any of these factors is profoundly unjust.
- The social safety net and its key components, including health care, must be maintained to reflect our shared commitment to protecting vulnerable populations.
- Concern for the most vulnerable in our community, particularly low-income women, men and children and people with disabilities, is at the heart of our sacred texts and an affirmation of our common humanity.
- Caring for our elders and treating them with dignity demonstrates the value we place on our enduring responsibility to enable all persons to live out the fullness of their days.

Together, Medicaid and Medicare address these principles and help fulfill our moral obligation to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of our society. Inasmuch as the above principles guide our organizations and the millions of people of faith we represent in our support for Medicaid and Medicare, we urge our elected leaders to consider these principles in their discussions about the future of these life-saving programs.

For more information:

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