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Jennifer Carr Allmon
Executive Director

December 3, 2021

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you about an urgent issue facing our health care system in the state of Texas and the underserved patients who benefit from this care. We ask you and your administration to take immediate action to approve the directed payment programs (DPPs) and withdraw any objections to the Local Provider Participation Funds (LPPFs).

Specifically, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is withholding approval of Texas' proposed Directed Payment Programs (DPPs) and threatening the viability of our Local Provider Participation Funds (LPPFs). As a result, Texas' children, elderly, disabled residents, and those living in poverty throughout our state risk losing access to critical care. It also jeopardizes $10 billion that historically has supported our state's Medicaid system. Losing these funds in our poorest communities will fracture and devastate our safety net, incredibly, in the midst of a global pandemic that has already adversely affected the poor. The loss of DPPs and LPPFs will harm single mothers in such urban areas as Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio, as well as cause suffering among the elderly poor in our rural areas who are frequently overlooked. Communities such as Laredo, Brownsville, and McAllen that are over 95% Hispanic are scheduled to lose nearly $400 million per year.

We are aware that your health care platform objected to adopting the Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Regulation (MFAR) that threatened the viability of the safety net. The policy your administration currently is citing as the reason for withholding these critical Medicaid funds, however, reportedly is rooted in that same proposal. We believe that danger to our safety net is so grave that we cannot sit silently.

Healthcare is an essential component of protecting the sanctity of life and promoting human dignity. Our Church teaches that we must especially care for

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vulnerable members of society. The bishops of Texas support equitable access to healthcare that is oriented toward the dignity of the whole person, made in the image and likeness of God.

We have heard you speak of growing up in poverty in Pennsylvania and we write to tell you that poor Texans face a similar dire situation, which you can resolve. Texas' most vulnerable residents—including the minority communities we serve—face a menacingly growing risk of losing access to care each day that funding is not restored. In 2015, Pope Francis addressed the United States Congress, stating, "Even in the developed world, the effects of unjust structures and actions are all too apparent. Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples. We must move forward together, as one, in a renewed spirit of fraternity and solidarity, cooperating generously for the common good."

This stalemate must end. We urge you to act immediately to direct your administration to quickly approve the DPPs and withdraw any objections to the LPPFs. The viability of our safety net rests on your decision.

Most Respectfully,

Daniel Cardinal DiNardo
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