

Health Care

We believe that each person is created by God and is precious in God's sight. Each individual has incomparable dignity and worth. Each individual's life is precious. As members of the Catholic Church, we joined our Bishops in advocating for a system of health care in the United States of America that would be affordable, accessible, and of high quality for every person, including undocumented immigrants.

On March 23, 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010. The legislation expands health care coverage to over 32 million Americans who are now uninsured. Eventually, every citizen must have health insurance or will have to pay a penalty. States may create exchanges through which small businesses will be able to provide insurance coverage for their employees. People near the poverty level will be eligible for government subsidies so that they can purchase health care coverage. The law also regulates insurance companies in order to eliminate the most onerous practices such as denying coverage to children based on pre-existing conditions.

A contentious issue during the debate pertained to abortion coverage. The health care reform legislation maintains current law against public funding of abortions. It also allows states to opt out of offering abortion coverage through the exchanges they create. President Obama also plans to issue an executive order to ensure that the status quo is upheld and enforced, and that the health care legislation's restrictions against the public funding of abortions cannot be circumvented.

The Kaiser Family Foundation provides detailed information about the legislation with respect to expanded coverage, health care cost controls, and improved health care delivery systems.

<http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/8061.pdf>