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PRESS RELEASE

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Catholic Medical Association Congratulates the House on the Release of the American Health Care Act

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Philadelphia, PA—Mar. 8, 2017—The Catholic Medical Association (CMA) congratulates Chairman Greg Walden (R-Ore.); Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX); their House Republican colleagues; and HHS Secretary Tom Price, on the release by the House Republicans of the [American Health Care Act](#) on March 6.

The Act proposes to improve patient-physician relationships and health care for Americans. It will dismantle Obamacare's damaging taxes and mandates, and aims to deliver quality, affordable options based on what patients and families truly need. Under Obamacare, premiums increased dramatically; contraceptive mandates led to significant lawsuits; and nearly 1/3 of all U.S. counties now have only one insurer offering plans on their state's exchange.

The new legislation removes individual and employer mandate penalties, which forced millions of people into expensive, inadequate plans. It expands Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), nearly doubling the amount of money people can contribute, and broadening how people can use them. It provides a monthly tax credit—between \$2,000 and \$14,000 a year—for low- and middle-income individuals and families who don't receive insurance through work or a government program. It protects patients by prohibiting health insurers from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions. It is expected the new plan will decrease premiums and enhance health care options for Americans, by allowing more innovation and competition in the health care market.

For Medicaid, there will be a stable transition period where the previous expansion will continue until 2020. It will then move to a "per capita allotment" so states can best serve patients most in need. Also, anyone then without work/government program-obtained insurance can obtain advanceable, refundable tax credits to access coverage. The CMA would support a final bill that provides and does not deny coverage for indigent patients.

The new Act does not fund abortion, staying consistent with the bipartisan Hyde Amendment. Obamacare subsidized abortion; this bill provides monthly healthcare tax credits, with provisions that prevent these credits from being used to fund abortion. However, there are pro-life concerns that the Senate may use strict budget rules to strip out such provisions banning funding for abortion. The CMA urges all members of Congress to ensure the protection of unborn babies in the final bill and that it not be turned into a political bargaining chip in any way.

There is much work remaining for Congress and the administration, including markups of the bill, compiling a final product, and voting. The CMA applauds the release of the *American Health Care Act*, and hopes that the final bill will defend the lives of the unborn, protect conscience rights, preserve the patient-doctor relationship, and give Americans a health care proposal that builds a culture of life and recognizes God's design for marriage and the family.

The CMA is the nation's largest professional organization of Catholic physicians. For more information about the CMA, please visit www.cathmed.org or email info@cathmed.org.

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