

**CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE
OF KENTUCKY**

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December 12, 2007

The Honorable Steve Beshear
Governor
Commonwealth of Kentucky
700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

RE: Current year Medicaid deficit; budget request for funding Medicaid in coming biennium

Dear Governor Beshear,

We understand that you face two important health care decisions for people who cannot afford to pay for medical care: how to address the significant Medicaid deficit, which we realize is an estimated \$112 million in state dollars, in the current fiscal year, and how much funding to request of the 2008 General Assembly for Medicaid in the coming biennium. We recognize that these are matters of great concern to you. Since funding preferences reflect not only economic policies but also moral values, we ask that you give priority in your budget decisions to the needs of persons who are poor and vulnerable, especially pregnant women and their unborn children, the mentally ill, mentally retarded, children and adults in low-income families, the frail elderly, the disabled, and immigrants including the undocumented.

For our Catholic community, health and the healing ministry are rooted in the biblical vision to heal persons who are sick, with special protection of people who are poor and needy. Adequate health care is a basic human right, necessary for the development and maintenance of life in accord with the dignity of human beings. A just society is one that protects and promotes the fundamental rights of its members – with special attention to meeting their basic needs, including the need for health care for people who are poor. Our Church seeks to embody our Savior's concern for the sick. The Kentucky Catholic community, the largest non-governmental provider of health and human services to low-income families in our state, is committed to providing services, including health care, to those who need it most. We also look to federal and state governments to continue to fulfill their role in guaranteeing health care for the poor through Medicaid.

We understand funds are available for allocation in the current fiscal year. We ask that you apply available money to the Medicaid deficit to insure that no person who relies on Medicaid for his or her health care loses access to vital medical services. We also ask that you request sufficient funding for the Medicaid program in the next biennial budget proposal to the General

**Most Reverend
Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D.**
Archbishop of Louisville

**Most Reverend
John J. McRaith**
Bishop of Owensboro

**Most Reverend
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Bishop of Covington

**Most Reverend
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Bishop of Lexington

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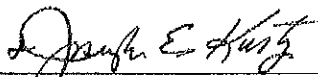
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Assembly to meet the health needs of Medicaid recipients. No person in Kentucky should be denied health care he or she cannot afford.

Our state budget is more than a fiscal plan; it reflects our values as a people responsible for the common good. Your two Medicaid budget choices have clear moral dimensions. In these difficult times, we urge you to keep uppermost in your mind and heart the needs of the "least of these" and make budget decisions that ensure that persons who are poor have their basic health care needs met.

We appreciate your service to the Commonwealth.


Sincerely,



+ Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz
Archbishop of Louisville



+ Most Reverend Roger J. Foys
Bishop of Covington



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Bishop of Owensboro



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