

# A Letter to Congress and The White House from the nation's children's hospitals

## *Where are the children?*

The health care debates for the past decade have focused on adults – their coverage, their benefits and how to pay for it. Medicaid, providing health care for over 70 million Americans, has been front and center of the Affordable Care Act and American Health Care Act debates. The fact that 30 million children receive their health care through Medicaid is almost never discussed. We are dismayed and alarmed national policy debates over Medicaid continue without the needs of nearly half of our country's children considered first and foremost.

Children represent the future of the United States. Where are kids in these discussions? Do Congress and the White House see safeguarding children's health care as a national priority?

The reality is although children are 25 percent of the population, we spend less than 10 percent of the federal budget on them. And, kids can't vote.

As the debate about health care for adults continues, the risk of collateral damage to children through inadvertent budget cuts is high and unrecognized. Our nation's leaders should be protecting children, and the decisions you make now will impact their lifetime health. A child today has on average 60 or more years of productive life ahead if we choose wisely. A stronger future for the United States depends on the health and well-being of today's children.

On behalf of the millions of children and families we serve, we call on Congress and the White House to make children the strong bipartisan priority they must become for our nation to have a brighter future.

Sincerely,

The Presidents, CEOs and Executive Directors of the nation's children's hospitals

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**Craig T. Albanese, M.D.**  
NewYork-Presbyterian

**Steve Allen, M.D.**  
Nationwide Children's Hospital

**Michael R. Anderson, M.D.**  
UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals

**Meri B. Armour**  
Le Bonheur Children's Hospital

**Michael D. Aubin**  
Wolfson Children's Hospital  
of Jacksonville

**Richard G. Azizkhan, M.D.**  
Children's Hospital &  
Medical Center

**David J. Bailey, M.D.**  
Nemours Children's Health System

**Madeline Bell**  
The Children's Hospital  
of Philadelphia

**John Bishop**  
Earl and Lorraine Miller  
Children's Hospital

**Robert I. Bonar, Dr. H.A.**  
Children's Minnesota

**Patrick J. Cawley, M.D.**  
Medical University of South Carolina  
Health and Children's Hospital

**Bob Connors, M.D.**  
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

**William H. Considine**  
Akron Children's Hospital

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe**  
CHOC Children's

**James D. Dahling**  
Children's Hospital  
of The King's Daughters

**Christopher G. Dawes**  
Lucile Packard Children's Hospital  
and Stanford Children's Health

**Susan Distefano**  
Children's Memorial  
Hermann Hospital

**Marcy Doderer**  
Arkansas Children's Hospital

**Jonathan M. Ellen, M.D.**  
Johns Hopkins  
All Children's Hospital

**Luanne M. Thomas Ewald**  
Children's Hospital of Michigan

**Mike Farrell**  
Advocate Children's Hospital

**Deborah Feldman**  
Dayton Children's Hospital

**Sandra L. Fenwick**  
Boston Children's Hospital

**Michael Fisher**  
Cincinnati Children's Hospital  
Medical Center

**Christopher A. Gessner**  
Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh  
of UPMC

**Guy Giesecke**  
Children's of Mississippi  
University of Mississippi  
Medical Center

**Keith D. Goodwin**  
East Tennessee Children's Hospital

**Luke Gregory**  
Monroe Carell Jr. Children's  
Hospital at Vanderbilt

**Kimberly Guy**  
St. Joseph's Children's Hospital

**Jena Hausmann**  
Children's Hospital Colorado

**Donna Hyland**  
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

**Barbara Walczyk Joers**  
Gillette Children's Specialty  
Healthcare Minnesota

**Paul A. King**  
University of Michigan  
C.S. Mott Children's Hospital

**Narendra Kini, M.D.**  
Miami Children's Health System

**Thomas D. Kmetz**  
Norton Children's Hospital

**Larry Levine**  
Blythedale Children's Hospital

**Patrick M. Magoon**  
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's  
Hospital of Chicago

**Joan Magruder**  
St. Louis Children's Hospital

**Rick W. Merrill**  
Cook Children's Health Care System

**Robert L. Meyer**  
Phoenix Children's Hospital

**Donald Mueller**  
Children's Hospital at Erlanger

**John D. Nash**  
Franciscan Children's

**Elias J. Neujahr**  
The Children's Hospital of San Antonio

**Kurt Newman, M.D.**  
Children's National Health System

**Randall L. O'Donnell, Ph.D.**  
Children's Mercy Hospital  
and Clinics Kansas City

**Giovanni Piedimonte, M.D.**  
Cleveland Clinic Children's  
Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital  
for Rehabilitation

**Jeff Poltawsky**  
UW Health  
American Family Children's Hospital

**David L. Reich, M.D.**  
The Mount Sinai Hospital/Kravis  
Children's Hospital

**Charles L. Schleien, M.D.**  
Cohen Children's Medical Center

**Mark Shen, M.D.**  
Dell Children's Health

**James E. Shmerling, DHA**  
Connecticut Children's  
Medical Center

**Edwin Simpser, M.D.**  
St. Mary's Healthcare System  
for Children

**Martha B. Smith**  
Kapi'olani Medical Center  
for Women and Children

**Cynthia N. Sparer**  
Yale New Haven Children's Hospital

**Jeff Sperring, M.D.**  
Seattle Children's

**Johnese Spisso**  
UCLA Health  
UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital

**Sheldon Stein**  
Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

**Todd A. Suntrapak**  
Valley Children's Healthcare

**Peggy Troy, RN**  
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin

**Paul S. Viviano**  
Children's Hospital Los Angeles

**Mike Wagner, M.D.**  
Floating Hospital for Children  
at Tufts Medical Center

**Mark A. Wallace**  
Texas Children's Hospital

**William Michael Warren, Jr.**  
Children's of Alabama

**Steve Woerner**  
Driscoll Children's Hospital

**Brenda J. Wolf**  
La Rabida Children's Hospital

**Mark Wietecha**  
Children's Hospital Association