



# CIRCLE *of* PROTECTION

July 20, 2022

Dear Senator:

The Circle of Protection is a coalition of national church bodies and related ministries representing the diversity of Christianity in this country. A number of the leaders in the Circle oversee thousands of congregations, and the organizations in the Circle together have close to 100 million members. Our churches are on the frontlines of poverty in communities across the country and around the world, and we all agree that our government should be doing more to provide help and opportunity to people in poverty. We also agree that the structural racism that has plagued our nation must be redressed. These convictions are rooted not in political ideology but in religious faith.

We are writing now with a very specific purpose—to urge that the budget reconciliation package include funding to close the Medicaid coverage gap and extend life-saving medical care to the two million Americans who are currently unprotected because their state did not expand Medicaid as provided under the Affordable Care Act.

We are focusing on action to close the Medicaid coverage gap, because we understand that this is the most important poverty-focused investment that might be included in the health-focused reconciliation bill that comes to the Senate floor. Extending Medicaid is a humane, cost-effective investment in the future of our nation, and this investment would especially benefit people of color.

You face many competing priorities, but few decisions you could make would be as life-changing as extending health coverage to low-income Americans for whom even a modest health crisis could lead to financial ruin or even death. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can be any assistance as you move forward with your decision. You may contact Rev. Dr. David Beckmann, Circle of Protection Coordinator at [david@davidbeckmann.net](mailto:david@davidbeckmann.net).

Signed,

Members of the Coordinating Committee of the Circle of Protection

**Rev. Dr. David Beckmann**, Dean's Advisor for Political and Economic Justice  
Virginia Theological Seminary; Coordinator, Circle of Protection

**Rebecca Blachley**, Director of Government Relations  
The Episcopal Church

**Rev. Galen Carey**, Vice President, Government Relations  
National Association of Evangelicals

**Rev. Eugene Cho**, President and CEO  
Bread for the World

**Rev. Carlos L. Malavè**, Coordinator  
Latino Christian National Network

**Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie**, Interim President and General Secretary National  
Council of Churches

**Rev. Amy Reumann**, Senior Director for Witness in Society  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**Bishop A.J. Richardson**, Senior Bishop  
African Methodist Episcopal Church

**Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero**, President and Founder  
National Latino Evangelical Coalition

**Rev. Adam Russell Taylor**, President  
Sojourners

**Rev. Jim Wallis**, Inaugural Chair of Faith and Justice; and Founding Director  
McCourt School of Public Policy; Center on Faith and Justice, Georgetown University

**Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner**, Co-Convener; President  
National African American Clergy Network; Skinner Leadership Institute