



February 12, 2021

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wyden, Chairman Murray, Ranking Member Crapo, and Ranking Member Burr:

Futures Without Violence is a national social justice organization focused on preventing violence against women and children utilizing public health approaches that build strong, safe and healthy families and communities. We understand deeply how trauma, adversity and exposure to violence in childhood can have severe lifelong consequences that not only reproduce violence in families but also cost our nation's health care system significantly.

Because of this we write you today in strong support of the nomination of Xavier Becerra to be the next Secretary for the Department of Health and Human Services. As a California-based organization, we have seen first-hand his commitment to protecting the safety of all people from violence and his commitment to ensuring all people have access to health care, including women and our most vulnerable. We look forward to working with him to address the health consequences of violence, improve access to health care for all survivors of violence, including immigrant and LGBTQ survivors, advance health equity, and utilize the untapped potential of the Administration for Children and Families to reduce trauma and violence and help families who are struggling heal and thrive.

Xavier Becerra is a highly qualified and passionate leader with demonstrated depth and breadth of experience spanning three decades. As Attorney General of California, he joined with Attorneys General from across the country in 2018 and 2020 to advocate for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. His defense of the Affordable Care Act has meant essential health care access and coverage for many previously uninsured people, including those experiencing sexual and domestic violence. For victims of violence, health care is even more essential given the toll it takes on the body and the critical role providers play in helping connect them to an advocate or someone who can help them. The ACA specifically includes screening and counseling for women who are victims of interpersonal violence as part of a well-woman visit, and the ACA also included groundbreaking home visiting programs that helped vulnerable new mothers and babies, including with support to address domestic violence.

As a Member of Congress, he was a strong supporter of legislation to help abused and neglected children and voted for the first Violence Against Women Act that included health care and youth-focused prevention programs. Throughout his tenure in Congress, he demonstrated year after year an understanding and commitment to health care access and the importance of programs that help lift up mental health and the needs of vulnerable children and families.

As America works to mitigate and recover from the harm of the COVID pandemic, it is essential that HHS have a leader who understands both the health and human services needs of our nation, and understands clearly that the toll of this virus has not been spread evenly. We believe for these reasons that Xavier Becerra is uniquely qualified to lead the Department of Health and Human Services and encourage you to quickly advance his nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Esta Soler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Esta Soler
President and Founder
Futures Without Violence