



The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chair
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate HELP Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

February 11, 2021

Dear Chair Wyden and Murray:

LeadingAge fully supports the nomination of Xavier Becerra as Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services and encourages the Committees to support his nomination. We worked closely with his office on long-term services and supports financing when he was a member of Congress and appreciated his understanding of, and commitment to addressing, the challenges facing our country to ensure that all older persons can age well wherever they call home.

LeadingAge represents more than 5,000 nonprofit aging services providers and other mission-minded organizations. Alongside our members and 38 state partners, we use applied research, advocacy, education, and community-building to make America a better place to grow old. Our membership encompasses the entire continuum of aging, including nursing homes, home and community-based services providers, hospice and affordable senior housing providers.

We support the nomination of Secretary-Nominee Becerra to be the next HHS Secretary to advocate for and carry out the robust health care platform outlined by President Joe Biden. We have confidence that he has the health care expertise and experience managing large systems that are critical to successfully leading HHS and that he will work with Congress to take quick action on such issues as:

- Beating COVID-19, by ensuring implementation of the Executive Orders mandating increased production of protective equipment, ensuring access to vaccinations and testing for all older persons and the front-line staff who serve them, and implementing the provisions in the CARES Act and other COVID-related legislation.
- Taking strong steps to promote racial equity by addressing stark economic disparities.
- Implementing the Administration's commitment to advancing HCBS to ensure that older persons have access to quality health care in the community.
- Implementing the Administration's commitment to addressing the needs of family caregivers.

- Advancing LGBTQ+ equality for older adults.
- Acting swiftly to fully integrate HHS/CMS and HUD collaboration on housing and services, as directed by Congress in the fiscal year 2020 HUD appropriations bill.

LeadingAge urges the swift approval of Mr. Becerra to be HHS Secretary.

Please reach out to LeadingAge senior vice president for policy, Ruth Katz, rkatz@leadingage.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Smith Sloan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Katie Smith Sloan
President and CEO
LeadingAge