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Sr. Simone Campbell Responds to House Vote on the American Health Care Act

"The blood of those who are denied coverage will be on the hands of those who voted for this bill."

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In response to the passage of the American Health Care Act in the U.S. House of Representatives, **Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice** said:

"The passage of the American Health Care Act (AHCA) in the House is a dangerous and irresponsible step that threatens access to healthcare for at least 24 million Americans. It violates Christian and Catholic faith teaching and the values of our nation.

"The AHCA cuts \$880 billion from Medicaid to give large tax cuts to the very wealthiest. **This is far from the Gospel mandate to care for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers.** It takes away access to healthcare for the most vulnerable and widens the gaps in inequality in our society. This vote was a vote against the millions of children, elderly, people living with disabilities, and people experiencing poverty who are supported by Medicaid.

"In order to appease the Freedom Caucus, the bill was amended to strip crucial protections for the millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions. The recent changes also gutted the Essential Health Benefit requirements that have expanded access to real, quality, health coverage. Despite these drastic changes, Congress rushed this terrible policy through without a Congressional Budget Office score to know the true consequences and without listening to the needs of the American people, who overwhelmingly oppose the AHCA.

"This was not the faithful way forward. We are hurting our people and rewarding the rich through tax breaks disguised as a healthcare reform bill. This is literal "blood money." The blood of those who are denied coverage will be on the hands of those who voted for this bill.

"NETWORK published our [10 Commandments of Healthcare Reform](#) based on our faith teaching to protect the most vulnerable. The bill that Speaker Ryan pushed through Congress today fails every single commandment. This is not faithful.

"The Republican party must change its priorities. Rather than preferencing the millionaires and billionaires, they need to begin to listen to their ordinary constituents. Ordinary people want to improve the healthcare we have, not destroy it."

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NETWORK, a national Catholic Social Justice lobby, which educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation, has a more than 40-year track record of lobbying for critical federal programs that support those at the margins and prioritize the common good.

Sister Simone has media availability in Washington, D.C. today and throughout the weekend. To interview Sister Simone contact Ashley Wilson, NETWORK Communications Coordinator at awilson@networklobby.org or 202-601-7856.