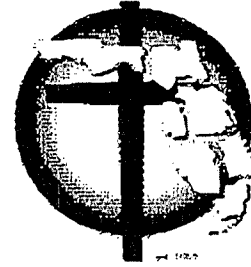


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D. MICHAEL MCCARRON, PH.D.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



July 14, 2009

Ophelia McLain  
Administration on Developmental Disabilities  
Administration for Children and Families  
U. S. Department of Health and Human Services  
370 L'Enfant Promenade SW  
Mail Stop: HHH 405D  
Washington, DC 20447

**Re: In Support of "Councils on Developmental Disabilities Ayudar Familia Project."**

Dear Ms. McLain:

The Florida Catholic Conference is supportive of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) proposal titled "Councils on Developmental Disabilities Ayudar Familia Project."

Our approach to care for human life is shaped by a simple, fundamental principle: every person has the right to adequate health care. This right flows from the sanctity of human life and the dignity that belongs to all human persons who are made in the image and likeness of God. The current health care system is, however, inequitable, due to the disparities between different groups of individuals, resulting in a system that is unjust for our state's most vulnerable residents.

Florida has benefitted from the cultural influence and work of individuals with Hispanic and Latino heritage since the sixteenth century. Tragically, Hispanic and Latino parents and guardians experience a greater number of barriers to health care access than their White non-Hispanic or Latino counterparts. These additional burdens include: 1) language barriers; 2) cultural (mis)understanding; 3) reluctance to join support groups; 4) fear of the U.S. Immigration Service; and 5) misgivings about aggressively claiming the rights of their children.

We believe the project design and partnerships will provide needed information to families of Hispanic or Latino children with developmental disabilities to improve the utilization of family support resources and to improve the quality of life for children with developmental disabilities and their families.

Respectfully yours,

D. Michael McCarron  
Executive Director