



## 2021 LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



**CHRISTUS Health** is a not-for-profit health care ministry committed to meeting the needs of the communities we serve. CHRISTUS strives to achieve quality health outcomes through innovative health and wellness solutions and compassionate patient care that advance the common good so that all may experience God's healing presence. CHRISTUS is an integrated health system with more than 600 centers, including long-term care facilities, community hospitals, walk-in clinics, and health ministries.

Our mission to extend the healing ministry of Jesus Christ pushes us to tirelessly seek to improve health, promote healing, and elevate hope for all. The communities served by CHRISTUS Health are consistently rural and plagued with the highest rates of uninsured individuals in the country, which is exacerbated by unpredictable reimbursement structures and barriers to accessible care. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic and several recent natural disasters have compounded the continuous financial strain our Louisiana health care providers have endured.

Even during an ongoing international pandemic and weather-related hardships, CHRISTUS continues to act as a safety-net provider in all of our Louisiana ministries.



To that end, CHRISTUS Health provided over **\$50 MILLION** in charity care and other community benefits in fiscal year 2020.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### Improving the health and wellness of individuals and communities

- Increase programs and funding to ensure patients with mental or behavioral health issues have access to preventative and real-time treatment in the most appropriate care setting.
- Initiate policies and focus efforts on ways to address social justice issues including the elimination of human trafficking.
- Support actions that ensure funding resources are available to the health care providers fighting to end the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Prioritize efforts to reduce maternal mortality rates.
- Promote policies that address health care workforce shortages across the state.



## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES CONT.

### Strengthen access and remove barriers

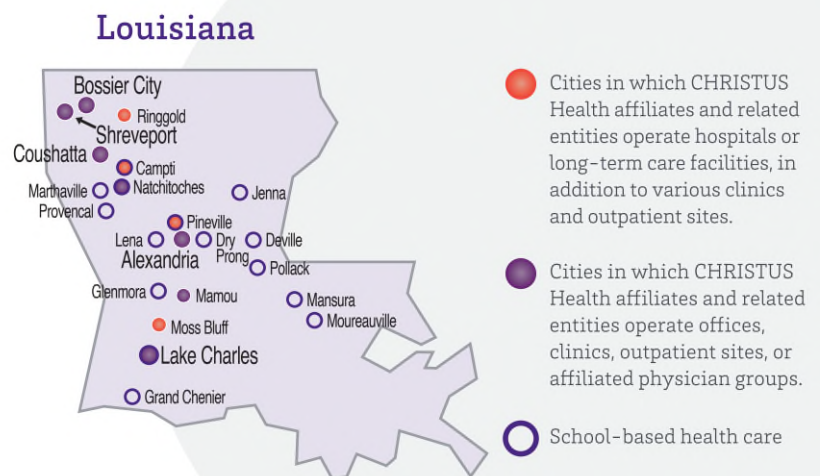
- Undertake initiatives focused on the expansion of broadband access to allow for a comprehensive, integrated network to support both urban and rural areas across Louisiana.
- Enforce approved reimbursement structures for telehealth services, including those that allow providers to reach vulnerable populations.
- Support efforts relating to the reformation of Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) to alleviate administrative and financial burdens on providers.

### Supporting the elimination of health care disparities

- Invest in public health initiatives and policies that ensure access to quality health care services to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes.
- Develop strategies to support the increase of health care workforce diversity.
- Promote policies consistent with CHRISTUS's Catholic identity and oppose proposals that would conflict with the Ethical and Religious Directives that inform our mission.

### Maintaining a strong safety net

- Secure and safeguard state funding for Louisiana's expanded Medicaid program to ensure individuals have access to timely and appropriate care.
- Effectuate policies and strategies to improve reimbursement and assist providers with care delivery to the uninsured and underinsured populations.
- Preserve and bolster programs that safeguard the health and well-being of vulnerable populations such as the elderly and low-income individuals.



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