



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

December 11, 2013

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Brown:

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 110,600 family physicians nationwide, wishes to extend our strong support for your amendment to the "SGR Repeal and Medicare Beneficiary Access Improvement Act of 2013" that would extend the current Medicaid primary care payment policy through 2015. We urge the Committee to adopt this amendment ensuring that current and future Medicaid beneficiaries have access to a primary care physician, live healthier lives, and are good stewards of health care resources.

In a few weeks, millions of individuals who have secured health care coverage through the Medicaid program will begin seeking a primary care physician to provide care to them and their family. The AAFP and our members are committed to ensuring that each of these individuals and their families are able to locate a family physician that can be their continuous source of comprehensive care. We know that, historically, poor payment rates in the Medicaid have discouraged family physicians from participating in the program. Congress recognized this and took corrective actions when they passed the Medicaid-to-Medicare payment policy in 2010. Sadly, this payment policy is set to expire right at the time that millions of patients will be seeking care through the Medicaid program. Literature clearly demonstrates that individuals who have health care coverage and access to continuous and comprehensive primary care are healthier and spend fewer health care resources than those who don't. We believe that this payment policy is important to realizing these goals in the Medicaid program.

Ideally, this policy would be extended through 2016, ensuring appropriate compensation for primary care physician services in the Medicaid program until the start of the alternative payment models as outlined in the proposed legislation. We applaud your leadership and strongly urge the Committee to adopt this important amendment.

Sincerely,

Jeff Cain, MD, FAAFP
Board Chair

C: Members, Senate Finance Committee

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