



January 11, 2017

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Member of Congress
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the 124,900 family physicians and medical student members we represent, I write to thank you for your leadership on policies to lower prescription drug prices. Specifically, I want to make you aware of our support to provide the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) with Medicare drug pricing negotiating authority.

Access to affordable pharmaceutical products is a serious and growing concern among America's family physicians. One third of the average family physician's patient panel consists of Medicare patients who often have one or more chronic health conditions that require multiple pharmaceutical products to manage. These patients' health and well-being depends on their adherence to treatment regimens, which is becoming more difficult due to the escalating costs of prescription drugs.

As advocates for our patients, the AAFP stands ready to work with you on this important policy. A 2016 Kaiser Family Foundation survey indicated that drug prices are a top concern among consumers. A 2016 *Journal of the American Medical Association's* published report indicated that from 2004 to 2014 Medicare's share of US drug expenditures increased from two percent of the total drug spending, or \$193 billion, to 29 percent or \$298 billion. These data coincide with the enactment of the *Medicare Modernization Act of 2003*, which increased access but prohibited CMS from engaging in price negotiations on behalf of beneficiaries.

Again, we are deeply concerned about prescription drug prices and supporting policies that will assist our patients in securing access to affordable pharmaceutical treatment options. Thank you for your continued leadership and the opportunity to weigh in on this important policy. For more information, please contact Sonya Clay, Government Relations Representative, at 202-232-9033 or sclay@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

Wanda D. Filer, MD, MBA, FFAFP
Board Chair

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