



July 25, 2018

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: HR 5858, the Primary Care Patient Protection Act of 2018

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 131,400 family physicians and medical students across the country, I write to request your support for HR 5858, the *Primary Care Patient Protection Act of 2018*, sponsored by Rep. Brad Schneider (D-IL) and Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY). This patient-centered legislation would assist individuals and families who are facing rising health care costs, by requiring that all high-deductible health plans (HDHPs) provide, without cost-sharing requirements, at least two primary-care office visits per year.

As individuals, families, and employers struggle with the escalating costs of health care, many are turning to HDHPs as a means of securing affordable health-care coverage. Almost 22 million Americans are now covered under HDHPs (defined as plans with a deductible of at least \$1,350 for an individual or \$2,700 for a family)—up from 1 million only 12 years ago.

HDHPs are innovative structures that have provided access to affordable health care coverage to millions of people; however, the deductibles associated with these plans can compound the cost problem for some. Evidence shows that the high out-of-pocket cost under the deductible causes some patients to delay seeking care, which extends lapses in health care maintenance, and decreases adherence to medication and treatment protocols. HDHPs should provide more value for the premiums families pay.

Under the *Primary Care Patient Protection Act of 2018*, individuals with a HDHP would be entitled to at least two annual visits with their primary care physician, or their primary care team, independent of cost-sharing—meaning that the services would be covered without any additional cost to the patient. This common sense, patient-centered legislation will assist millions of individuals and families who have secured health care coverage through a HDHP, but face obstacles to accessing the health care system due to their deductibles, secure access to their primary care physicians.

The American Academy of Family Physicians strongly supports this legislation and we encourage you to support it by becoming a co-sponsor. If you have any additional questions about the AAFP's views, please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Adair, J.D., at aadair@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

www.aafp.org

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Meigs, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end that includes the letters "MD".

John Meigs, Jr., MD, FAFP
Board Chair