



September 7, 2016

The Honorable Ed Markey
U.S. Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
U.S. Senate
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael Bennet
U.S. Senate
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman
U.S. Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: S 3130, The *Independence at Home Act of 2016*

Dear Senators Markey, Cornyn, Bennet, and Portman:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 124,900 family physicians and medical students across the country, I write to express the AAFP's support for the *Independence at Home Act of 2016*.

As the largest national physician organization that is dedicated solely to primary care, the AAFP applauds your leadership in developing and introducing this legislation, which would expand a successful Medicare primary-care demonstration program on a nationwide basis. The Independence at Home (IAH) model uses home-based primary-care teams to carry out plans of care tailored to meet the needs of Medicare beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions and a history of hospitalization and other high-cost interventions. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has released evaluation results of the IAH demonstration showing that participating practices in the first and second years of the program have improved quality while achieving substantial savings. In short, the demonstration is showing exactly how comprehensive, coordinated, patient-centered primary care can help improve quality and lower costs in our health-care system for patients with complex chronic illness.

Congress enacted the IAH Demonstration Program in 2010, which is now in effect from June 1, 2012 through September 30, 2017. CMS reports that in Performance Year 2, 15 participating practices were caring for 10,484 beneficiaries. The AAFP believes that with nationwide expansion of the demonstration, many more practices will participate and accordingly many more Medicare beneficiaries with complex chronic illness will benefit from 24/7 in-home visits that are proven to reduce hospital and emergency department admissions, and improve overall quality of care.

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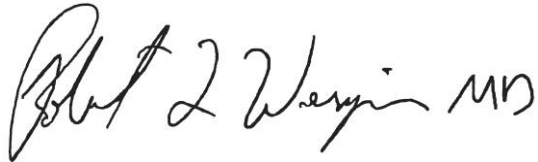
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Leawood, KS

It should be noted that while the AAFP strongly supports team-based primary care, and robust cooperation between physicians and all members of the health-care team, the AAFP remains committed to the position that such teams be led by physicians. For any additional questions you might have about the AAFP's perspectives, please have your staff contact Andrew Adair, Government Relations Representative, at aadair@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert L. Wergin MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "W".

Robert L. Wergin, MD, FAAFP
Board Chair