



March 23, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the 120,900 family physicians and medical students we represent, I am writing to express our concerns with the *Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2015* (HR 2745).

Currently, our country is experiencing an unprecedented level of mergers and acquisitions in all areas of the health care industry. Economists, policy experts, and policy-makers at both the state and federal levels have raised [substantive concerns](#) about the potentially [negative impact](#) further consolidation in the health care industry would have on access to and affordability of health care for consumers. These concerns are valid, given that decades of research clearly demonstrates that, with few exceptions, mergers and acquisitions in the health care industry tend to result in higher prices and fewer choices for consumers.

The proposed policies in HR 2745 would, in our opinion, run contrary to clearly stated bipartisan goals of expanding access to affordable health care and “bending the cost curve.” Given these bipartisan goals, the pace of consolidation in health care should be of great concern to the United States Congress. Additionally, given that Medicare and Medicaid are two of the largest health insurance programs in the country, we believe Congress should be diligent in using all available resources to curb activities that clearly increase the cost of health care for the federal government and the more than 100 million people covered by these two programs.

Congress should carefully consider the potential negative impact this legislation would have on the federal government’s ability to evaluate and prevent market activities that, according to decades of research, increase costs for consumers, employers, and the federal government. Curbing the ability of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to evaluate mergers and acquisitions in the health care marketplace and, when appropriate, to intervene on behalf of consumers concerns us.

[www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org)

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We urge Congress to reconsider whether this is the right policy that should be pursued at this time of unprecedented consolidation in health care.

Sincerely,

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

Robert Wergin, MD, FAAFP  
Board Chair

C:     The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
       The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
       The Honorable Steve Scalise