



October 23, 2019

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the 134,600 family physicians and medical students we represent, thank you for holding a mark-up to consider legislation that would expand access to affordable primary care. The AAFP strongly supports the advancement of policies that would create greater utilization of comprehensive, coordinated and continuous primary care.

Encouraging an ongoing relationship with a family physician can be achieved in many ways. One of the approaches supported by the AAFP is the direct primary care (DPC) model. The AAFP has been a strong supporter of the DPC model for more than a decade and views it as a practice model that is consistent with our goals of expanding access to primary care for all Americans and is one of growing interest to our members.

The Primary Care Enhancement Act (H.R. 3708) is aligned with current AAFP [policy](#) that supports changes to existing law to permit individuals holding a health savings account (HSA) to use those funds to pay the periodic payments associated with a DPC practice for a defined set of primary care services. For this reason, the AAFP encourages the Committee to approve H.R. 3708 and advance the bill to the next stages of the legislative process.

While the bill would achieve our foundational policy objective of allowing individuals and families to use their HSA accounts to pay periodic payments to a DPC practice, there are provisions of the bill that we believe need to be modified as the legislation moves through the legislative process. The AAFP looks forward to working with you to ensure that the legislation is designed in a manner that creates the financial framework that allows family physicians to provide comprehensive primary care to individuals and families, including the disbursement of pharmaceutical products as permitted by law.

Additionally, the AAFP looks forward to working with the Committee to advance other legislative proposals that are similarly designed to expand access to family physicians and primary care, especially for those with high-deductible health plans. To this end, the AAFP encourages the Committee to promptly consider Primary Care Patient Protection Act (H.R. 2774). This bipartisan legislation, which is strongly supported by the AAFP and insurers, would facilitate access to primary care physicians for the millions of Americans who will face increasing out-of-pocket costs from high-deductible health plans.

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For more information, please contact Erica Cischke at 202-232-9033 or ecischke@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Cullen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John S. Cullen, MD, FAAFP
Board Chair