

February 25, 2022

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Neal
Chairman
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Ranking Member
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing over *one million* physician and non-physician health care clinicians, we respectfully request that your committees collaborate with the provider community to immediately initiate formal proceedings (hearing, roundtables, expert panels, etc.) to discuss potential reforms to the Medicare physician payment system to ensure continued beneficiary access to care.

We appreciate Congress' actions over the last several years to mitigate scheduled cuts to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS). However, systemic issues such as the negative impact of the Medicare physician fee schedule's budget neutrality requirements and the lack of an annual inflationary update will continue to generate significant instability for health care clinicians moving forward, threatening beneficiary access to essential health care services. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these existing issues. Furthermore, challenges associated with the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act's (MACRA) Quality Payment Program (QPP) have prevented most clinicians from meaningfully participating in the program. For example, non-physician clinicians are still not fully integrated in the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) because most are ineligible to report cost and promoting interoperability measures which account for 55% of MIPS scoring. The incentive payments have also been historically low, far below the 9% Congress intended, rendering them an ineffective mechanism to offset the reductions required by budget neutrality. Therefore, improving MIPS and Alternative Payment Models, including extending the current incentives for participating in Advanced APMS, is also essential.

Under the current payment system, many health care clinicians continue to face steep annual reductions in their Medicare payments. The inherent instability of the MPFS, coupled with the shortcomings of MACRA's QPP, has created an environment where many practices have seen their payments decrease year-over-year, despite increasing costs and growing inflation.

Building on the broad bipartisan and bicameral support for recent efforts to mitigate steep payment cuts, our organizations welcome the opportunity to work together to establish a pathway for identifying policy solutions that will ensure long-term stability for the MPFS. Millions of seniors rely on the Medicare program, and we must work to ensure it remains a robust and dependable option for those who need it the most. We remain committed to partnering with Congress to identify and advance necessary reforms and appreciate your continued support of the health care clinicians on whom many Americans rely.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Alliance for Physical Therapy Quality and Innovation
Alliance for Recovery Care
Alliance of Specialty Medicine
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association
American Academy of Audiology
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association of Clinical Urologists
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Chiropractic Association
American College of Cardiology
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Gastroenterology
American College of Mohs Surgery
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American College of Physicians
American College of Radiation Oncology
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Health Care Association
American Medical Association
American Medical Group Association
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association

American Occupational Therapy Association
American Optometric Association
American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society
American Osteopathic Association
American Physical Therapy Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Rhinologic Society
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Society for Radiation Oncology
American Society for Surgery of the Hand
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Breast Surgeons
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
American Society of Colon & Rectal Surgeons
American Society of Diagnostic and Interventional Nephrology
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of General Surgeons
American Society of Hand Therapists
American Society of Neuroradiology
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Society of Retina Specialists
American Speech–Language–Hearing Association
American Urogynecologic Society
American Urological Association
American Vein & Lymphatic Society
Association for Clinical Oncology
Association for Quality Imaging
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Pathology Chairs
CardioVascular Coalition
Clinical Social Work Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Dialysis Vascular Access Coalition
Digestive Health Physicians Association
Heart Failure Society of America
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Infusion Providers Alliance
Large Urology Group Practice Association
Medical Group Management Association
National Association for the Support of Long Term Care
National Association of Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies
National Association of Spine Specialists

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc
National Center for Assisted Living
Outpatient Endovascular and Interventional Society
Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association
Radiology Business Management Association
Renal Physicians Association
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society of Interventional Radiology
Society of NeuroInterventional Surgery
Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
United Specialists for Patient Access

Cc:

U.S. Senate

U.S. House of Representatives