

February 10, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
H-232, The Capitol  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune  
Senate Majority Leader  
S-230, The Capitol  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
House Democratic Leader  
H-204, The Capitol  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Democratic Leader  
S-221, The Capitol  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, and Leader Jeffries:

The undersigned national medical societies and state medical associations write to collectively urge Congress to include in the forthcoming March 2025 appropriations bill, provisions that both reverse the latest round of Medicare payment cuts and provide physicians with a meaningful payment increase that reflects ongoing inflationary pressures. Our organizations were surprised and deeply disappointed that the final version of the American Relief Act 2025 failed to include *any* financial relief for physicians. America's physicians are united in urging Congress to use the forthcoming March appropriations bill as an opportunity to provide physicians with desperately needed fiscal relief that is imperative to ensuring that seniors retain access to health care services under Medicare.

Following Congressional inaction to stop the cuts finalized by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Calendar Year (CY) 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) Final Rule, payments for physicians treating Medicare patients were reduced by an additional 2.83 percent, effective January 1, 2025. The decision to allow previously enacted partial patches to earlier rounds of physician payment reductions to expire without any new relief marks the fifth consecutive year of Medicare physician payment cuts, a truly startling trend that threatens to exacerbate access to care issues throughout the United States. As a result, the unfortunate reality is that physicians' Medicare payments have now been reduced by 33 percent since 2001, when adjusted for inflation in practice costs. In addition, CMS concluded in the CY 2025 MPFS Final Rule that the Medicare Economic Index (MEI), a cumulative measure of the individual costs of running a practice, will increase by 3.5 percent this year. Expecting physicians to provide the same level of care to America's seniors despite being underpaid by over 30 percent and witnessing exponential growth in the cost of providing medical services is simply unsustainable. This cycle threatens to undermine the overarching stability of the Medicare program.

The decision by Congress to extend a variety of other expiring hospital, ambulance, and telehealth provisions in the American Relief Act 2025 without providing physicians any relief was equally troubling. Furthermore, our members understandably think that the federal government has essentially turned its back on physicians following the recent CMS announcement that Medicare Advantage (MA) plans will receive an average payment increase of 4.33 percent from 2025 to 2026. While MA plans receive an increase beyond the expected health care inflation rate, Congress has not acted to incorporate a temporary or permanent inflationary adjustment to the MPFS to ensure adequate access to care.

Thankfully, a bipartisan collection of federal lawmakers has introduced, yet again, another solution to this serious policy issue. Representatives Greg Murphy, MD (R-NC), Jimmy Panetta (D-CA), Mariannette

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Miller-Meeks, MD (R-IA), and Kim Schrier, MD (D-WA), along with several other bipartisan House members, have introduced an updated version of the Medicare Patient Access and Practice Stabilization Act, H.R. 879. This bipartisan bill will prospectively, specifically between April 1 and December 31, 2025, stop the latest round of payment cuts in full. The bill also provides physicians with a crucial two percent payment increase, which is about half of the MEI estimate for this year. Therefore, we urge Congressional leadership to adopt the Medicare Patient Access and Practice Stabilization Act as part of the forthcoming legislation to fund the government beyond mid-March.

The time for legislative action is now. America's physicians and the millions of patients we treat can no longer accept any excuses, such as an overcrowded legislative calendar, competing policy priorities, or an inability to achieve bipartisan consensus, as reasons for not including provisions that reverse the latest round of cuts and provide a crucial payment update in next appropriations package. We appreciate the opportunity to outline the many fiscal challenges facing physician practices and stand ready to assist with the overarching effort to expeditiously enact this much needed legislation. Our Medicare beneficiaries and the physicians who treat them deserve the stability that this legislation will provide.

Sincerely,

American Medical Association  
Academy of Physicians in Clinical Research  
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Academy of Emergency Medicine  
American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy  
American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Academy of Sleep Medicine  
American Association for Hand Surgery  
American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodagnostic Medicine  
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons  
American Association of Public Health Physicians  
American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology  
American College of Cardiology  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American College of Gastroenterology  
American College of Lifestyle Medicine  
American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics  
American College of Mohs Surgery

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American College of Physicians  
American College of Radiation Oncology  
American College of Radiology  
American College of Rheumatology  
American College of Surgeons  
American Epilepsy Society  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Society for Clinical Pathology  
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association  
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy  
American Society for Laser Medicine & Surgery, Inc.  
American Society for Radiation Oncology  
American Society for Surgery of the Hand Professional Organization  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
American Society of Anesthesiologists  
American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery  
American Society of Echocardiography  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Neuroradiology  
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine  
American Society of Retina Specialists  
American Society of Transplant Surgeons  
American Thoracic Society  
American Urogynecologic Society  
American Urological Association, Inc.  
American Venous Forum  
Association for Clinical Oncology  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
College of American Pathologists  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Endocrine Society  
Heart Rhythm Society  
International Pain and Spine Intervention Society  
Medical Group Management Association  
Outpatient Endovascular and Interventional Society  
Renal Physicians Association  
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions  
Society for Vascular Surgery

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Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons  
Society of Critical Care Medicine  
Society of Hospital Medicine  
Society of Interventional Radiology  
Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging  
The American Society of Breast Surgeons  
The American Society of Dermatopathology  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Medical Association of the State of Alabama  
Alaska State Medical Association  
Arizona Medical Association  
Arkansas Medical Society  
California Medical Association  
Colorado Medical Society  
Connecticut State Medical Society  
Medical Society of Delaware  
Medical Society of the District of Columbia  
Florida Medical Association  
Medical Association of Georgia  
Hawaii Medical Association  
Idaho Medical Association  
Illinois State Medical Society  
Indiana State Medical Association  
Iowa Medical Society  
Kansas Medical Society  
Kentucky Medical Association  
Louisiana State Medical Society  
Maine Medical Association  
MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society  
Massachusetts Medical Society  
Michigan State Medical Society  
Minnesota Medical Association  
Mississippi State Medical Association  
Missouri State Medical Association  
Montana Medical Association  
Nebraska Medical Association  
Nevada State Medical Association  
New Hampshire Medical Society  
New Mexico Medical Society  
North Carolina Medical Society  
Medical Society of New Jersey  
Medical Society of the State of New York  
North Dakota Medical Association  
Ohio State Medical Association

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Oklahoma State Medical Association  
Oregon Medical Association  
Pennsylvania Medical Society  
Rhode Island Medical Society  
South Carolina Medical Association  
South Dakota State Medical Association  
Tennessee Medical Association  
Texas Medical Association  
Utah Medical Association  
Vermont Medical Society  
The Medical Society of Virginia  
Washington State Medical Association  
West Virginia State Medical Association  
Wisconsin Medical Society  
Wyoming Medical Society