

January 11, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

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

Dear Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi,

We write today as a diverse group of health care stakeholders negatively impacted by Congress' failure to extend several Medicare payment policies that expired at the end of fiscal year 2017 and calendar year 2017. We urge swift legislative action to ensure that our nation's seniors and millions of Americans with disabilities still have access to these critical Medicare providers and health care programs that they depend on. These programs have been renewed by Congress almost regularly since their inception, and often with bipartisan support. Medicare extender policies help a wide range of health care constituencies – these policies guarantee that ambulance providers reach beneficiaries in need of emergency care; that rural hospitals and home health agencies continue serving their communities; that low-income seniors can afford their Medicare premiums; and, that beneficiaries maintain access to medically necessary therapy services. We are deeply concerned about the effects that further legislative inaction, even if just short-term, will have on beneficiaries' access to care.

We were pleased to see the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, and the House Energy and Commerce Committee announce bipartisan deals on several of these Medicare extender policies last fall. However, we were disappointed that the latest Continuing Resolution passed by both Chambers did not address these critical Medicare extenders. As Medicare providers, we now face an uncertain financial future heading further into the New Year, and are particularly worried about whether rural providers will be able to continue caring for and treating Medicare patients. Despite a variety of political challenges, we remain hopeful that Congress will address Medicare extenders early in 2018 and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues to fund these now-expired policies.

We strongly urge that Congress take action on Medicare extenders as they address the January 19th expiration of the current Continuing Resolution or any other package addressing health care issues, such as reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Sincerely,

American Ambulance Association

American Health Care Association (AHCA)
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association (AMRPA)
American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)
American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
Association of Critical Care Transport (ACCT)
Brain Injury Association of America
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Emergency Department Practice Management Association
Falling Forward Foundation
Focus on Therapeutic Outcomes, Inc. (FOTO)
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association for the Support of Long Term Care (NASL)
National Association of Emergency Medical Service Physicians
National Center for Assisted Living
National Rural Health Association (NRHA)
Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare
Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association
Texas Association for Home Care and Hospice
United Spinal Association

CC: United States House of Representatives
United States Senate