

December 4, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Majority Leader United States Senate Washington, DC 20510 The Honorable Charles Schumer Minority Leader United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer:

We write to express our support for addressing upcoming physician payment cuts in ongoing legislative negotiations. We believe these cuts will further strain our health care system, which is already stressed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and jeopardize patient access to medically necessary services over the long-term.

On December 1, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services finalized the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule for 2021. The fee schedule includes several positive attributes, including improvements for maternity care and much-needed payment increases for physicians delivering primary and other essential outpatient and office-based care to some of our nation's most vulnerable patients. These changes should take effect on January 1, 2021, as planned.

However, a statutory budget neutrality rule requires that any increases in Medicare payments for these office visits, also known as evaluation and management (E/M) services, must be offset by corresponding decreases. As a result, many practitioners including surgeons, specialists, therapists and others face substantial cuts beginning on January 1, 2021, if Congress does not take action to provide relief.

Health care professionals across the spectrum are reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 emergency as they continue to serve patients during this global pandemic. The payment cuts finalized by CMS would pose a threat to providers and their patients under any circumstances, but during a pandemic the impact is even more profound. Therefore, we hope to work with you to address this critical issue.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Debbie Stabenow United States Senator

Robert Menendez

United States Senator

Sincerely, 0110

Steve Daines United States Senator

hn Boozman

United States Senator

<u>/s/ Thomas R. Carper</u> Thomas R. Carper United States Senator

<u>/s/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.</u> Robert P. Casey, Jr. United States Senator

/s/ Gary C. Peters Gary C. Peters United States Senator

<u>/s/ Kyrsten Sinema</u> Kyrsten Sinema United States Senator

<u>/s/ Christopher A. Coons</u> Christopher A. Coons United States Senator

<u>/s/ Kirsten Gillibrand</u> Kirsten Gillibrand United States Senator

<u>/s/ Jacky Rosen</u> Jacky Rosen United States Senator

<u>/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin</u> Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator

<u>/s/ Amy Klobuchar</u> Amy Klobuchar United States Senator /s/ Kevin Cramer Kevin Cramer United States Senator

<u>/s/ James Lankford</u> James Lankford United States Senator

/s/ Rand Paul Rand Paul United States Senator

/s/ Shelley Moore Capito Shelley Moore Capito United States Senator

<u>/s/ John Barrasso</u> John Barrasso United States Senator

<u>/s/ Mike Rounds</u> Mike Rounds United States Senator

/s/ Bill Cassidy Bill Cassidy United States Senator

<u>/s/ Jerry Moran</u> Jerry Moran United States Senator

<u>/s/ Thom Tillis</u> Thom Tillis United States Senator /s/ Jon Tester Jon Tester United States Senator

<u>/s/ Tammy Duckworth</u> Tammy Duckworth United States Senator

<u>/s/ Jeanne Shaheen</u> Jeanne Shaheen United States Senator

<u>/s/ Dianne Feinstein</u> Dianne Feinstein United States Senator

<u>/s/ Mark R. Warner</u> Mark R. Warner United States Senator

/s/ Brian Schatz Brian Schatz United States Senator

/s/ Cory A. Booker Cory A. Booker United States Senator

<u>/s/ Tina Smith</u> Tina Smith United States Senator

<u>/s/ Chris Van Hollen</u> Chris Van Hollen United States Senator /s/ Cindy Hyde-Smith Cindy Hyde-Smith United States Senator

<u>/s/ James Inhofe</u> James Inhofe United States Senator

<u>/s/ Josh Hawley</u> Josh Hawley United States Senator

/s/ Roger F. Wicker Roger F. Wicker United States Senator

/s/ John Hoeven John Hoeven United States Senator

/s/ Deb Fischer Deb Fischer United States Senator

<u>/s/ Todd Young</u> Todd Young United States Senator

/s/ David Perdue David Perdue United States Senator

/s/ Pat Roberts Pat Roberts United States Senator /s/ Margaret Wood Hassan Margaret Wood Hassan United States Senator

/s/ Doug Jones Doug Jones United States Senator

/s/ Mazie K. Hirono Mazie K. Hirono United States Senator /s/ Marco Rubio Marco Rubio United States Senator

<u>/s/ Jack Reed</u> Jack Reed United States Senator

/s/ Sheldon Whitehouse Sheldon Whitehouse United States Senator

<u>/s/ Richard Blumenthal</u> Richard Blumenthal United States Senator

<u>/s/ Catherine Cortez Masto</u> Catherine Cortez Masto United States Senator /s/ Sherrod Brown Sherrod Brown United States Senator

/s/ Mark Kelly Mark Kelly United States Senator