

December 8, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and the undersigned state medical associations representing hundreds of thousands of physicians and the patients they serve, we strongly urge Congressional action to prevent the **entire 4.5% reduction to Medicare payment rates** from being implemented on January 1, 2023. This desperately needed relief will help provide crucial short-term financial stability for practices until permanent, bipartisan payment reforms are enacted.

The impending 4.5% Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) payment cut comes as medical practices throughout the country are experiencing pressures stemming from rising rates of inflation. All health care stakeholders struggle to endure steep, annual payment reductions; however, the negative impact of such policy decisions is exacerbated by the fact that physicians are the only providers whose Medicare payments do not automatically receive an annual inflationary update. This statutory flaw that characterizes the MPFS consistently leads to financial uncertainty and budgetary challenges for all physicians. The stark reality is that, adjusted for inflation in practice costs, Medicare physician pay has *declined* 22 percent from 2001 to 2021. Allowing cuts to Medicare payments is simply unacceptable during this time of record inflation and coming on the heels of a highly disruptive pandemic.

Burnout, stress, workload, and the cumulative impact of COVID-19 are leading one in five physicians to consider leaving their current practice within two years. Payment cuts will only accelerate this unsustainable trend and undoubtedly lead to Medicare patients struggling to access health care services. As a result, we cannot overstate the importance of Congress stopping the looming 4.5% reduction, in full. Put simply, the cost of Congressional inaction is an across-the-board cut that will further amplify the financial hardship physician practices are already facing while inhibiting Medicare from delivering on its promises to seniors and future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Medical Association of the State of Alabama
Alaska State Medical Association
Arizona Medical Association
Arkansas Medical Society

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California Medical Association
Colorado Medical Society
Connecticut State Medical Society
Medical Society of Delaware
Medical Society of the District of Columbia
Florida Medical Association Inc
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
Medical Society of New Jersey
New Mexico Medical Society
Medical Society of the State of New York
North Carolina Medical Society
North Dakota Medical Association
Ohio State Medical Association
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

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Medical Society of Virginia
Washington State Medical Association
West Virginia State Medical Association
Wisconsin Medical Society
Wyoming Medical Society