

January 2, 2023

The Honorable Greg Murphy
United States House of Representatives
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Danny Davis
United States House of Representatives
2159 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Murphy and Davis,

On behalf of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), alongside the **XX** undersigned osteopathic specialty and state associations collectively representing more than 186,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, we write to express our support for the *Preserving Seniors' Access to Physicians Act* (H.R.6683). This bipartisan legislation would fully prevent the pending cuts to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) due to take effect on January 1, 2024. Enactment of this legislation would prevent further harm to the financial stability of physician practices and would allow them to continue providing essential care to Medicare beneficiaries, ensuring patients can maintain access to timely and high-quality care.

Physicians nationwide are currently facing a 3.37% payment cut for seeing Medicare beneficiaries, continuing the year over year payment cuts that threaten to fundamentally alter the care delivery landscape in the United States. While the annual payment cuts and uncertainty impact all physicians, it disproportionately affects DOs and the patients we serve. Despite being 11% of physicians in the United States, DOs comprise 40% of physicians practicing in medically underserved areas. Moreover, the sustainability of independent physician practices is foundational to ensuring adequate patient access to primary care services in rural and underserved communities. Analysis of Medicare Trustees data found that inflation-adjusted Medicare payments to clinicians have decreased by 26% from 2001-2022, and the impact will only become more severe as payment cuts are compounded by CMS' estimated 4.6% increase in practice costs for next year.¹

As physicians continue to struggle with rising practice costs, workforce shortages, and other economic factors, any payment reduction jeopardizes the viability of physicians' practices and patients' ability to access care. Year over year payment reductions underscore the need for Congress to work towards comprehensive physician payment reform that takes the true cost of practice administration into account. While comprehensive reform is important in the long term, legislation to avoid the looming MPFS cut presents an existential need in the short term. The *Preserving Seniors' Access to Physicians Act* would provide essential stability and clarity to physicians while ensuring continued access to the care our senior citizens need.

Again, the AOA and our affiliates stand ready to assist you in securing the enactment of this important legislation. If you have any questions or if the AOA can be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact John-Michael Villarama, MA, AOA Vice President of Congressional Affairs and Public Policy, at jvillarama@osteopathic.org or (202) 349-8748.

Sincerely,

American Osteopathic Association

¹ Analysis of Medicare Trustees and CBO Reports: [Medicare Updates Compared to Inflation](#).