



July 26, 2023

The Honorable Jason Smith
Chairman
Ways and Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Ways and Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Inclusion of Prior Authorization Provisions in Health Care Price Transparency Act

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Neal,

On behalf of the Regulatory Relief Coalition (RRC), a coalition of national physician specialty organizations seeking to reduce regulatory burdens that interfere with patient care, we are pleased to see that the House Committee on Ways and Means is considering legislation that incorporates the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act ("Seniors" Act).¹

We greatly appreciate your committee's stalwart efforts to ensure that Medicare Advantage (MA) policies are not a barrier to timely and equitable access to care for the patients our members serve. The RRC also applauds the leadership, insight, and tenacity of Ways and Means Committee members, Reps. Mike Kelly (R-PA) and Suzan DelBene (D-WA) for advancing this legislation.

The RRC is a leading advocate for reforming prior authorization (PA) in the MA program on behalf of the more than 28 million seniors enrolled in MA plans and the physicians who care for them. Along with the RRC, more than [500](#) organizations representing patients, health care physicians and other clinicians, the medical technology and biopharmaceutical industry, health plans, and other organizations endorsed the "Seniors" Act in the previous session. The legislation finished the 117th Congress with [380](#) combined co-sponsors — 53 senators and 327 representatives. It is time for this bill to become the law of the land.

Over the past several years, members of Congress have become increasingly concerned about the barriers to patient access resulting from MA plans' use of PA. Notably, the "Seniors" Act originated with the basic policy proposition that Congress can and should ensure proper transparency and oversight of the MA program to protect our nation's seniors. PA plays an

¹ The bill has not yet been introduced in the 118th Congress. In the 117th Congress, the House Committee on Ways and Means advanced the bill ([H.R. 3173](#)) out of committee, and on Sept. 14, 2022, the full House of Representatives unanimously passed the bill by voice vote.



important role in utilization management, but it can be misused or overused, creating considerable challenges for patients, providers, and payers.

If adopted, the bill will reduce barriers to care, lessen provider burden, and help ensure that Medicare beneficiaries who enroll in MA plans have the same access to Medicare-covered items and services as beneficiaries who opt for traditional Medicare.

Thank you for moving this critical legislation forward. We hope you will join us in urging Congress to follow your committee's leadership and commitment to protecting patients from delays and denials of care by passing this bipartisan legislation before the end of this year.

Sincerely,

RRC Members

American Academy of Dermatology
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Cardiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Osteopathic Association
Association For Clinical Oncology
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Medical Group Management Association
National Association of Spine Specialists
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions

RRC Allies

American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association
The National Association for Proton Therapy
Select Medical