

September 14, 2026

The Honorable John Joyce, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
2102 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Murphy, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kim Schrier, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
1110 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Joyce, Murphy, and Schrier:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and the undersigned state medical associations, representing physicians in every state and the District of Columbia, we write to express our support for H.R. 9693, the “Patients First Act.” This comprehensive, bipartisan legislation would reform the Medicare physician payment system and replace the annual cycle of cuts and temporary patches with a payment system that is stable, predictable, and more reflective of the actual costs of delivering care.

The need for reform is urgent. When adjusted for inflation in practice costs, Medicare physician payment has fallen approximately 33 percent since 2001. Physicians remain the only Medicare provider type that does not receive an annual payment update tied to inflation. This growing gap has forced many practices - particularly small, rural, and independent practices - to consolidate or limit the number of Medicare patients they serve, threatening timely access to care for millions of patients in our states.

The Patients First Act addresses these structural flaws. It establishes a permanent annual payment update linked to the Medicare Economic Index; modernizes outdated budget neutrality policies to prevent destabilizing across-the-board cuts; replaces the Merit-based Incentive Payment System with a streamlined, clinician-driven quality program that reduces penalties and administrative burden; and preserves meaningful incentives for physicians participating in alternative payment models. These reforms align with the Characteristics of a Rational Medicare Physician Payment System, the framework endorsed by more than 120 state medical associations and national medical specialty societies.

We commend your bipartisan leadership in introducing this legislation and urge your colleagues to join as cosponsors. Our organizations stand ready to work with you to advance the Patients First Act through the legislative process and secure a sustainable Medicare program for patients and physicians.

Sincerely,

Medical Association of the State of Alabama
Alaska State Medical Association
Arizona Medical Association
Arkansas Medical Society
California Medical Association
Colorado Medical Society
Connecticut State Medical Society
Medical Society of Delaware

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Medical Society of the District of Columbia
Florida Medical Association
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
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
Medical Society of Virginia
Washington State Medical Association
West Virginia State Medical Association
Wisconsin Medical Society
Wyoming Medical Society