

September XX, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

We write to bring to your attention a matter of great urgency. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will be issuing new payment policies in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule for 2021. The changes have many positive attributes, including improvements for maternity care and much-needed payment increases for physicians delivering primary and complex office-based care to some of our nation's most vulnerable patients.

Unfortunately, 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 specialists now face substantial cuts beginning on January 1, 2021, if Congress does not act before the end of the year. Payment cuts of this magnitude will surely strain a health care system that is already stressed by the COVID-19 pandemic and could jeopardize patient access to medically necessary services.

In order to safeguard beneficiaries' access to care during this pandemic, we as Congress should examine possible bipartisan solutions to address excessively steep cuts. We encourage you to incorporate the resulting policy changes in any upcoming legislation moving through the House.

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. Thank you for considering our request and for your continued leadership during these trying times.

Sincerely,