

December 10, 2013

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dave Camp
Chairman
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sandy M. Levin
Ranking Member
House Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders of the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees:

The undersigned organizations urge your committees to vote to approve the bipartisan, bicameral *SGR repeal and Beneficiary Access Improvement Act of 2013*, a critical step toward enactment of legislation to permanently repeal the SGR and ensure beneficiary access to care. Our combined memberships include primary care physicians, medical specialists, and medical students, in all parts of the country and in all types of practices.

We believe that this bill achieves several critically important objectives:

1. It repeals the Medicare SGR, once and for all, and all future SGR-related scheduled cuts.
2. It consolidates that separate Medicare reporting programs into one Value-based Payment (VPB) program, cancels the existing penalties scheduled for 2016 under the current reporting programs, and requires a GAO study for harmonizing measures used by Medicare and private payers.
3. It creates multiple pathways—including medical homes and registries—for physicians to qualify for higher annual payments by successfully participating in the new VBP program or in an alternative payment (APM) model.
4. It expressly creates positive incentives for *Primary Care* Patient-Centered Medical Homes and Patient-Centered Medical Home *Specialty* practices, under both the VBP program and as an APM.
5. It provides financial support to smaller practices in all geographic areas to help them be successful under the VBP and APM programs.
6. It doubles federal funding for performance measurement development.

Like our colleagues in other physician membership organizations, we believe that after a decade of Medicare updates that have not kept pace with inflation, positive updates for at least the first

several years of transitioning to APMs and VBPs is necessary, which is a feature of the bipartisan Energy and Commerce committee bill that was unanimously reported out in July. We ask you to consider adding such positive updates in the final bill that is sent to the President for his signature.

Each of our organizations has given the chairman and ranking members of your committees additional policy recommendations that we ask be considered as the committees move the legislation forward. We believe that an affirmative vote now for *the SGR Repeal and Medicare Beneficiary Access Improvement Act of 2013* is a critically important step to achieving repeal of the SGR, ensuring beneficiary access to care, and making other needed reforms in Medicare physician payments.

Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM)
AMDA - Dedicated to Long Term Care Medicine
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD)
American College of Cardiology
American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP)
American College of Physicians (ACP)
American Geriatrics Society (AGS)
American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM)
American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (ASBMT)
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE)
American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
American Society of Hematology (ASH)
American Society of Nephrology (ASN)
American Thoracic Society (ATS)
Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA)
Renal Physicians Association (RPA)
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM)
Society of General Internal Medicine (SGIM)

CC: Members of the House Ways and Means Committee
Members of the Senate Finance Committee