

November 12, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The COVID-19 global health pandemic remains unprecedented in both the scale and scope of its impact, and the response by the government and health care community to this crisis has been similarly unparalleled. The reality of the current situation is clear – it will be at least several months before life begins to return to “normal,” and the pandemic will continue to place financial stress on our nation’s health care system, threatening the viability of those serving the most vulnerable communities. It is for this reason that we ask Congress to extend the current moratorium on the Medicare sequestration cuts, which are scheduled to return January 1, 2021, until the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The decisive action taken by Congress to date has averted disastrous impediments to care for the American people, but emerging trends in both infection and hospitalization rates signal that the worst is not yet behind us. October and November saw record setting daily infections, with over 100,000 new cases reported nationally in a single day and total reported cases surpassing 10 million. These infection rates signal renewed stress on our health care system as we enter the winter months with the virus more likely to spread from indoor transmissions. This upsurge in cases also has impacted the financial health of medical professionals and facilities, including the increased cost of labor to ensure adequate staffing, procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE), significant reductions in patient volume resulting from orders to cancel non-emergent procedures, and the high cost of caring for COVID patients.

The moratorium on the Medicare sequester included in *The CARES Act* was a clear acknowledgement of the important role that Medicare reimbursement plays in the financial wellbeing of our health care system. While Congress does not have the power to end the pandemic, it does have the ability to prevent the additional, damaging financial stress that would be caused by the return of the Medicare sequester. We urge you to take action before the end of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress to prevent the return of the Medicare sequester until the end of the public health emergency.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Community Health Plans  
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Ophthalmology  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Association for Homecare  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American College of Gastroenterology  
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Surgeons  
American Medical Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Optometric Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
America's Essential Hospitals  
America's Health Insurance Plans  
America's Physician Groups  
AMGA  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Federation of American Hospitals  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
National Association for Behavioral Healthcare  
Premier healthcare alliance  
Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association  
Vizient, Inc.