

November 3, 2022

The Honorable Ami Bera, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Bera and Bucshon,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing cancer care providers across the country, we extend our strong support for the *Supporting Medicare Providers Act of 2022*, HR 8800. This critical legislation would mitigate payment cuts within the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) by providing a 4.42% positive adjustment to the conversion factor (CF) for CY23. We are committed to working with you to ensure H.R. 8800 is enacted before the pending cuts take effect on January 1, 2023.

As you know, the 2023 MPFS proposed rule jeopardizes the financial stability of many physician practices by proposing to cut the Medicare conversion factor by approximately 4.5%. These cuts are compounded by the pending 4% pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) reduction and the termination of the 2% sequestration moratorium in July 2022.

These payment reductions come at a time when physician practices, hospitals that employ physicians and other stakeholders continue to face uncertainty about the future of pandemic recovery, rising inflation, staffing shortages, and increased administrative burden. Furthermore, there is no mechanism in place to bring payment levels to the current cost of providing care. These compounding negative financial factors facing those who treat Medicare patients are amid historically high inflation. From 2001 to 2021, taking into account inflation, Medicare reimbursement has decreased by as much as 20%.

Lastly, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) included 5% bonus payments to incentivize participation in Alternative Payment Models (APMs) to deliver high-quality care while generating savings for the Medicare program. Importantly, there is a two-year lag between performance and payment years. Currently, the 5% bonus for Advanced APMs expires at the end of 2022, after which there will be a gap year between the expiration of the bonus payments and the restart of modest annual updates. Absent Congressional action, the 5% payment cut will be implemented, providing less incentive for providers to participate in an Advanced APM and could jeopardize the sustainability of APMs long term.

ASCO and its State Affiliates stand ready to work with Congress to identify solutions to ensure long-term stability and preserve Medicare beneficiaries' access to oncology providers.

We urge Congress to expeditiously enact legislation that:

- Provides at least a 4.42% conversion factor adjustment for 2023, as included in your legislation, H.R. 8800,
- Waives the 4% statutory PAYGO requirement,
- Provides one-year inflationary update based on the Medicare Economic Index (MEI), and
- Eliminates the 2% sequestration cuts to Medicare.

These important policy changes would provide oncology practices with crucial short-term fiscal stability while simultaneously laying the foundation for necessary long-term payment reforms.

Sincerely,

Association for Clinical Oncology
Alabama Cancer Congress
The Arizona Clinical Oncology Society
Arkansas Association of Cancer Professionals
Association of Northern California Oncologists
Connecticut Oncology Association
Dakota Oncology Society
Delaware Society for Clinical Oncology
Denali Oncology Group
Empire State Hematology & Oncology Society
Florida Society of Clinical Oncology
Georgia Society of Clinical Oncology
Hawaii Society of Clinical Oncology
Idaho Society of Clinical Oncology
Illinois Medical Oncology Society
Indiana Oncology Society
Iowa Oncology Society
Kansas Society of Clinical Oncology
Kentucky Society of Clinical Oncology
Louisiana Oncology Society
Maryland/D.C. Society of Clinical Oncology
Massachusetts Society of Clinical Oncologists
Medical Oncology Association of Southern California, INC.
Medical Oncology Society of New Jersey
Michigan Society of Hematology and Oncology
Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology
Mississippi Oncology Society
Missouri Oncology Society
Montana State Oncology Society
Nebraska Oncology Society
Nevada Oncology Society
New Mexico Society of Clinical Oncology
North Carolina Oncology Association
Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society
Ohio Hematology Oncology Society
Oklahoma Society of Clinical Oncology
Oregon Society of Medical Oncology
Pennsylvania Society of Oncology and Hematology
Puerto Rico Association of Hematology and Medical Oncology
Rocky Mountain Oncology Society
Society of Utah Medical Oncologists
South Carolina Oncology Society
Tennessee Oncology Practice Society
Texas Society of Clinical Oncology
Virginia Association of Hematologists and Oncologists
Washington State Medical Oncology Society

West Virginia Oncology Society
Wisconsin Association of Hematology and Oncology
Wyoming State Oncology Society

Cc:

Speaker Nancy Pelosi

Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer

Minority Leader Mitch McConnell