

September 20, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer, Senate Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and House Minority Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the millions of Medicare patients across the country, the undersigned organizations write to express our strong support for the Preserving Access to Home Health Act of 2022 (H.R. 8581/S. 4605).

In the CY 2023 Home Health Proposed Payment System (HHPPS), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed a permanent 7.69 percent payment cut to Medicare home health services beginning in 2023 as well as clawback cuts totaling \$2 billion beginning in 2024 for services already provided during the first two years of the pandemic, with the potential for additional cuts in subsequent years. Estimates show this equates to a \$1.33 billion cut from home healthcare in 2023 alone, with the total cuts reaching up to \$18.15 billion over the next ten years. These cuts pose a grave threat to the health and safety of the 3.5 million Medicare beneficiaries who utilize home health services each year.

Data suggest these cuts put nearly half of American home health agencies at risk of closure. Without access to home health, particularly in rural and underserved communities across the nation, patients will have no choice but to seek post-acute and rehabilitative care in more expensive institutional settings.

Legislation, introduced by Representatives Sewell and Buchanan and Senator Stabenow would prevent CMS from imposing the 7.69 percent payment cut to home health services until 2026 and block the \$2 billion clawback cut from going into effect. This legislation would give Medicare's home health community time to recover from the financial pressures of the pandemic and provide continued access to care for patients.

Our organizations remain concerned that without swift action, patient access to care and stability for home health providers will be at risk. Medicare home health services are utilized by some of the nation's most vulnerable patients, with nearly half having five or more chronic health conditions and a quarter being over the age of 85. The patients we represent deserve the choice of receiving short-term recovery and rehabilitation care in the comfort of their own homes, where they are safer and can be surrounded by loved ones.

Thank you for considering our perspective, and we urge you to swiftly pass this bipartisan legislation to protect older Americans and individuals with disabilities' access to Medicare home health services.

Sincerely,

AliveAndKickn
Avery's Hope
Cervivor, Inc.
Colon Cancer Coalition
Center for Medicine in the Public Interest
International Foundation for AiArthritis
ONE CANCER PLACE, inc.
People with Empathy
Patients Rising Now
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association
RetireSafe
Support Fibromyalgia Network
The Steffens Scleroderma Foundation