August 30, 2017

Dear Member of Congress:

The undersigned organizations – representing Medicare beneficiaries and patients, all sectors of the healthcare industry as well as employers and other purchasers of health care – believe strongly that the Medicare program must protect patient access to quality healthcare. The Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), a provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), not only poses a threat to that access but also, once activated, will shift healthcare costs to consumers in the private sector and infringe upon the decisionmaking responsibilities and prerogatives of the Congress. We request your support to repeal IPAB.

IPAB, as constructed under PPACA, is a board comprised of Presidential appointees who will be charged with making recommendations to cut Medicare expenditures if spending growth reaches an arbitrary level. Once the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) implements an IPAB recommendation, that action is not subject to administrative or judicial review. As constructed, IPAB is granted unprecedented powers – even the ability to change laws previously enacted by Congress – with virtually no oversight.

The potential impact of this board causes deep concern among our organizations and the millions of Americans we represent. IPAB proponents suggest that the board will be an asset in developing needed healthcare delivery reforms. That goal, however, is not realistically achievable. The law requires IPAB to achieve scoreable savings within a one-year time period. Thus, instead of pursuing long-term reforms that may not achieve immediate savings, IPAB is more likely to consider short-term savings in the form of payment cuts for healthcare providers. This was, in fact, the conclusion of the Congressional Budget Office, which stated that IPAB is most likely to focus on payment rates or methodologies for services provided by non-exempt providers.

This would be devastating for patients, affecting access to care and innovative therapies. Already, the number of physicians unable to accept new Medicare patients due to low reimbursement rates has been increasing over the past several years. IPAB-generated payment reductions would only increase the access difficulties faced by too many Medicare beneficiaries. Furthermore, payment reductions to Medicare providers will almost certainly result in a shifting of health costs to employers and consumers in the private sector.

Under IPAB’s provisions, the responsibility for enacting healthcare system changes of this magnitude would be transferred from the legislative branch to the executive. More specifically, an unelected board without adequate oversight or accountability would be taking actions historically reserved for the public’s elected representatives in the U.S. House and Senate. This is an unacceptable decisionmaking process for a program that millions of our nation’s seniors and individuals with disabilities rely upon.

Moreover, if IPAB does not act within the law’s required timeframe or if IPAB members are not appointed by the President or confirmed by the Senate, the law transfers IPAB’s responsibilities solely to the HHS Secretary. This places an enormous degree of power in the hands of one unelected individual.

We strongly support bringing greater cost-efficiency to the Medicare program. We also advocate continuing efforts to improve the quality of care delivered to Medicare beneficiaries.
The Independent Payment Advisory Board will achieve neither of these objectives and will only weaken, not strengthen, a program critical to the health and well-being of current and future beneficiaries. We urge Congress to eliminate the IPAB provision.

Sincerely,

1 in 9: The Long Island Breast Cancer Action Coalition
60 Plus Alabama
60 Plus Association
A Partnership of Diabetics
Abbott
Actelion Pharmaceuticals
Action CF
ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+)
AdvaMed - the Advanced Medical Technology Association
Advocacy Council of ACAAI
Advocates for Responsible Care (ARxC)
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families
AIDS Community Research Initiative of America
AIDS CT
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
AIDS Outreach Montana
AIDS Resource Center Ohio
AIDS Response Seacoast
AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region
Alabama ACEP
Alabama Association of Ambulatory Surgery Centers
Alabama Council of Community Mental Health Boards
Alabama Hospital Association
Alabama Lifespan Respite Resource Network
Alabama Podiatric Medical Association
Alabama Society for Clinical Social Work
Alabama Society for the Rheumatic Diseases
Alaska Behavioral Health Association
Alaska ACEP
Alaska Rheumatology Alliance
Alaska State Medical Association
Alliance for Patient Access
Alliance of Specialty Medicine
Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin
Alzheimer's Arkansas
Alzheimer's Association - Capital of Texas Chapter
Alzheimer's Texas
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association for Hand Surgery
American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
American Association of Clinical Urologists
American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association
American Behcet's Disease Association
American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American College of Cardiology
American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP)
American College of Mohs Surgery
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Congress of Obstetricians & Gynecologists
American Congress of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Oklahoma Chapter
American Gastroenterological Association
American Glaucoma Society
American Kidney Fund
American Liver Foundation
American Liver Foundation Pacific Coast Division
American Medical Association
American Military Society
American Nurses Association
American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society
American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Osteopathic Association
American Osteopathic College of Rheumatology
American Physical Therapy Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
American Shoulder and Elbow Surgeons
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association
American Society for Mohs Surgery
American Society for Surgery of the Hand
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
American Society of Ophthalmic Administrators
American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
American Society of Plastic Surgeons
American Spinal Injury Association
American Urological Association
American Uveitis Society
AmerisourceBergen
Amgen
AMN Healthcare
Arizona Bioindustry Association (AZBio)
Arizona College of Emergency Physicians
Arizona Radiological Society
Arizona United Rheumatology Alliance
Arizona Urological Society
Arkansas Chapter ACEP
Arkansas Medical Society
Arkansas Ophthalmological Society
Arkansas Orthopaedic Society
Arkansas Podiatric Medical Association
Arkansas Rheumatology Association
Arthritis Foundation
Arthritis Foundation South Central Region
Arthroscopy Association of North America
Ascension
Association of Black Cardiologists
Association of University Professors in Ophthalmology
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter
Atrius Health
Austin Radiological Association
BEACON - Biomedical Engineering Alliance & Consortium
Better Medicare Alliance
Bingham County Senior Center
Bio Nebraska Life Sciences Association
BioBuzz Workforce Foundation
Biocom
BioFlorida
BIOForward
BioHouston
BioKansas
BioNJ
BioNorthTX
BioOhio
Bioscience Association of West Virginia
Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)
BioUtah
Birmingham Neurosurgery and Spine Group, PC
Brain Injury Alliance of Oregon
Brain Injury Association of Nebraska
California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
California ACEP
California Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce
California Association of Health Facilities
California Association of Neurological Surgeons, Inc
California Chronic Care Coalition
California Health Collaborative
California Hepatitis C Task Force
California Life Sciences Association - CLSA
California Medical Association
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families
Delaware HIV Consortium
Dia de la Mujer Latina
Easter Seals
Easter Seals Central and Southeast Ohio Inc.
Easter Seals Central Texas
Easter Seals Iowa
Easter Seals Massachusetts
Easter Seals Nebraska
Easter Seals North Georgia
Easter Seals of Southeastern PA
Eastern Orthopaedic Association
EDSers United Foundation
Eisai Inc.
Eli Lilly and Company
ELLAS
Emergency Department Practice Management Association
Enchantment Healthcare
Endometriosis Association
Enterprise Family Healthcare
Epilepsy Association of the Big Bend
Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago
Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Southern Illinois
Epilepsy Foundation of Hawaii
Epilepsy Foundation of San Diego County
Epilepsy Foundation of Western Wisconsin
Familia Unida Living with MS
FCEP Florida College of Emergency Physicians
Federation of American Hospitals
Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health ~ CO Chapter
First Step House
Fleet Reserve Association
Florida Allergy, Asthma & Immunology Society
Florida Neurosurgical Society
Florida Orthopaedic Society
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
Florida Partners in Crisis
Florida Podiatric Medical Association
Florida Society of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery
Florida Society of Rheumatology
Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Friends of Our Lady of Good Counsel
Geaux Group
Georgia Bio
Georgia College of Emergency Physicians
Georgia Commission on Women
Georgia Neurosurgical Society
Georgia Orthopaedic Society
Georgia Osteoporosis Initiative
Georgia Podiatric Medical Association
Georgia Society of Clinical Oncology
Georgia Society of Dermatology and Dermatological Surgery
Georgia Society of Ophthalmology
Georgia Society of Rheumatology
Georgia Women's Institute
Global Genes
Global Healthy Living Foundation
Global Liver Institute
Granite State Taxpayers
Greater North Dakota Chamber
Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
H.E.A.L.S of the South (Hepatitis Education, Awareness and Liver Support)
Hawaii ACEP
Hawaii Independent Physicians Association
Hawaii Medical Association
Hawaii Podiatric Medical Association
Health Agents for America, Inc. (HAFA)
Healthcare Innovation Exchange
HealthCare Institute of New Jersey (HINJ)
Healthcare Leadership Council
HealthHIV
Healthy African American Families
Hispanic CREO
Home Care Association of Washington
Hopkins County Memorial Hospital
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network
Idaho Association of Nurse Anesthetists
Idaho Medical Association
Idaho Orthopaedic Association
Idaho Orthopaedic Society
Idaho Osteopathic Physicians Association
Idaho Podiatric Medical Association
Idaho State Dental Association
Illinois Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Illinois College of Emergency Physicians
Illinois Manufacturers’ Association
Illinois Neurological Institute
Illinois Podiatric Medical Association
Illinois Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
Illinois State Ambulance Association
Illinois State Medical Society
INACEP
Independent Medical Providers Action Council
Indiana Academy of Ophthalmology
Indiana Health Industry Forum
Indiana Medical Device Manufacturers Council
Indiana Neurosurgical State Society
Indiana Podiatric Medical Association
Indiana State Medical Association
Indiana University Health, Inc.
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Insight Human Services
Integral Rheumatology and Immunology Specialists (IRIS)
International Foundation for Autoimmune Arthritis
International Institute of Human Empowerment
International Society for the Advancement of Spine Surgery
ION Solutions
Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology
Iowa ACEP
Iowa Biotechnology Association
Iowa Orthopaedic Society
Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association
Iowa Podiatric Medical Society
Iowa State Grange
J. Robert Gladden Orthopaedic Society
JobKeeper Alliance
Johnson & Johnson
Julian CNA Training School
Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine
Kansas Orthopaedic Society
Kansas Podiatric Medical Association
Kansas Rheumatology Alliance
Kansas Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
Kansas Urological Association
Kendall Square Association
Kentuckiana Rheumatology Alliance
Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Kentucky ACEP
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Kentucky Life Sciences Council
Kentucky Medical Association
Kentucky Psychiatric Medical Association
Kidney Cancer Association
Kidney Care Partners
Latin American Chamber of Commerce
Latino Commission on AIDS
Latino Diabetes Association
Licensed Professional Counselors Association
Life Science Tennessee
Life Sciences Greenhouse of Central PA
Life Sciences Pennsylvania
Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction Society
Louisiana Alumni, Sigma Kappa GNO
Louisiana Association of Neurological Surgeons
Louisiana Liberty 64
Louisiana Lifespan Respite Coalition
Louisiana Orthopaedic Association
Louisiana Podiatric Medical Association
Louisiana Womens’ Network
Lower New York Chapter, The American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists
Lupus Alliance of Long Island/Queens
Lupus Alliance of Upstate New York
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association
Lupus Foundation New England
Lupus Foundation of America
Lupus Foundation of America, DC/MD/VA Chapter
Lupus Foundation of Arkansas, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of Colorado
Lupus Foundation of Florida, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of Northern California
Lupus Foundation of PA
Lupus Foundation of Southern California
Lupus LA
Lupus Society of Illinois
MA Health Council
MACEP - Massachusetts College of Emergency Physicians
Maine ACEP
Malecare Cancer Support
Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals
Manufacture Alabama
Maryland Chapter American College of Emergency Physicians
Maryland Orthopaedic Association
Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, Inc.
Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire Rheumatology Association
Massachusetts Medical Device Industry Council (MassMEDIC)
Massachusetts Medical Society
Massachusetts Orthopaedic Association
Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
MassBio
Maxim Healthcare Services
Maxima Home Health LLC
Meals on Wheels North Carolina
MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society
Medical Alley
Medical Association of Georgia
Medical Association of the State of Alabama
Medical Device Manufacturers Association (MDMA)
Medical News
Medical Oncology Association of Southern California
Medical Society of New Jersey
Medical Society of the State of New York
Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)
MedTech Association
MemorialCare Health System
Mended Hearts
Men's Health Network
Mental Health America of Montana
Mental Health Systems
Merck
Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce
Michigan Association of Neurological Surgeons
Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians
Michigan Biosciences Industry Association - MichBio
NAMI Montana
NAMI Nebraska
NAMI Nevada
NAMI New Mexico
NAMI North Carolina
NAMI North Dakota
NAMI Northern Nevada
NAMI Ohio
NAMI Rochester
NAMI Sioux Falls
NAMI Skagit
NAMI Stark County
NAMI Upper Valley Idaho
NAMI Virginia
NAMI Washington
NAMI York County
NASW Texas Chapter
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Alliance on Mental Illness of Central Suffolk
National Alliance on Mental Illness of Park County, WY
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association for Uniformed Services
National Association of Hepatitis Task Forces
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Social Workers - NC Chapter
National Association of Social Workers - Virginia Chapter
National Association of Spine Specialists
National Center for Policy Analysis
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians
National Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Association
National Grange
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Minority Quality Forum
National Psoriasis Foundation
National Retail Federation
National Rural Health Association
National Spasmodic Torticollis Association
NCCEP North Carolina College of Emergency Physicians
NC State Grange
Nebraska Medical Association
Nebraska Rural Health Association
Nebraska State Grange
Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom
Neuro Network Partners
Neurofibromatosis, Inc. Mid-Atlantic
Neurosurgical Society of Kentucky
Nevada Academy of Ophthalmology
Nevada Chapter ACEP
Nevada Health Care Association
Nevada Orthopaedic Society
New England Biotech Association
New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.
New Jersey Chapter ACEP
New Jersey Mayors Committee on Life Science
New Jersey Orthopaedic Society
New Jersey Rheumatology Association
New Jersey State Nurses Association
New Mexico Biotechnology & Biomedical Association (NMBio)
New Mexico Association of Nurse Anesthetists
New Mexico Chapter ACEP
New Mexico Health Care Association
New Mexico Podiatric Medical Association
New York ACEP
New York Regional Society of Plastic Surgeons
New York State Neurological Society
New York State Ophthalmological Society
New York State Rheumatology Society
New York State Society of Orthopaedic Surgeons, Inc.
New York State Society of Plastic Surgeons, Inc
New York State Urological Society
NHACEP
North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society
North Carolina Alliance for Retired Americans
North Carolina Biosciences Organization
North Carolina Chamber
North Carolina Foot & Ankle Society
North Carolina Psychological Association
North Carolina Rheumatology Association
North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
North Dakota Chapter ACEP
North Dakota Medical Association
North Dakota Podiatric Medical Association
North Dakota Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
North Macon Family Healthcare Associates
Northeast Kidney Foundation
Northern Utah Coalition, Inc.
Northwest Urological Society
Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation
Occasional Riot
Ogden Branch of the NAACP
Ohio ACEP
Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities
Ohio Association of Medical Equipment Services
Ohio Association of Rheumatology
Ohio Chamber of Commerce
Ohio Council for Home Care and Hospice
Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association
Ohio Jewish Communities
Rheumatism Society of the District of Columbia
Rheumatology Alliance of Louisiana
Rheumatology Association of Iowa
Rheumatology Association of Minnesota and the Dakotas
Rheumatology Association of Nevada
Rheumatology Society of North Texas
Rhode Island Chapter ACEP
Rhode Island Medical Society
Rhode Island Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Rhode Island Tech Collective
Rio Grande Valley Diabetes Association
RIPMA
Rocky Mountain Stroke Center
RTI Surgical Inc.
Rush To Live
SAGE Utah
Saint Agnes Healthcare
Salud U.S.A.
Sandhills Adult Day Health Center, Inc.
San Diego County Podiatric Medical Association
Sanofi US
SC Podiatric Medical Association (SCPMA)
Scoliosis Research Society
Sea Island Pediatrics
Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging
Seniors Golden Hammer
Seniors Hospitality Center / Bonners Ferry Senior Center
Sickle Cell Disease Association of Florida
Sjögren's and Lupus Foundation of Hawaii
Sjogren's Syndrome Foundation
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
Smile Community Action Partnership
Society of Academic Urologists
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of Military Orthopaedic Surgeons
Society of Urologic Oncology
Solidarity Project Advocacy Center
South Carolina BIO
South Carolina Hospital Association
South Carolina Medical Association
South Carolina Medical Group Management Association (SCMGMA)
South Carolina Nurses Association
South Carolina Orthopaedic Association
South Carolina Rheumatism Society
South Carolina Society of Ophthalmology
South Carolina Urological Association
South Dakota Biotech
South Dakota State Medical Association
South Dakota State Orthopaedic Society
South Florida Cancer Association
Southern Orthopaedic Association  
State Chamber of Oklahoma  
State of Texas Association of Rheumatologists  
State of Texas Kidney Foundation  
Statewide Independent Living Council of Hawaii  
StopAfib.org  
Suicide Awareness Voices of Education  
Sunovion Pharmaceuticals Inc.  
Survivors Cancer Action Network  
Takeda Pharmaceuticals, USA Inc.  
TCEP Texas College of Emergency Physicians  
Tech Council of Maryland  
Tennessee Association of Long Term Care Physicians  
Tennessee Geriatrics Society  
Tennessee Hemophilia and Bleeding Disorders Foundation  
Tennessee Medical Association  
Tennessee Orthopaedic Society  
Tennessee Rheumatology Society  
Texas Association for Home Care and Hospice  
Texas Association of Business  
Texas Association of Neurological Surgeons  
Texas BioAlliance  
Texas Health Resources  
Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute  
Texas Life-Sciences Collaboration Center  
Texas Medical Association  
Texas Neurological Society  
Texas Nurse Practitioners  
Texas Orthopaedic Association  
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association  
Texas Pain Society  
Texas Radiological Society  
Texas State Grange  
The AIDS Institute  
The Arc in Hawaii  
The Arc of Anchorage  
The Benefits Consultancy  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
The Macula Society  
The Marilyn Fagan Ovarian Cancer Patient Advocacy Program (ICAN-Hawaii)  
The Meeting Group, Inc.  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research  
The National Association of Catholic Nurses - U.S.A.  
The National Catholic Bioethics Center  
The New England Council  
The New Mexico Association for Home and Hospice Care  
The Retina Society  
The Surgery Center of Huntsville  
The US Oncology Network  
The Vision Care Center  
The Wall Las Memorias Project
Twin Falls Senior Center
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Pain Foundation
Union Pacific Railroad Employees Health Systems
Urban Pain Institute
Utah Advocates
Utah Medical Association
Utah Podiatric Medical Association
Utah Pride Center
Utah State Orthopedic Society
Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness
Vermont Medical Society
Vermont State Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons, Inc.
Veterans Health Council
Vietnam Veterans of America
Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota
Virginia Bio
Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Virginia Podiatric Medical Association
Virginia Society of Eye Physicians and surgeons
Visiting Nurse Association
Visiting Nurse Association of Ohio
VITAS Healthcare
Vizient, Inc.
Washington ACEP
Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association
Washington Rheumatology Alliance
Washington Rural Health Association
Washington State Medical Association
Washington State Orthopaedic Association
Washington State Podiatric Medical Association
Washington State Prostate Cancer Coalition
Washington State Urology Society
Wellness and Education Community Action Health Network
Wellness Station
West Virginia Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
West Virginia Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery, Inc.
West Virginia Orthopaedic Society
West Virginia State Rheumatology Society
Western Orthopaedic Association
Western Section of the American Urological Association
Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Wisconsin Academy of Ophthalmology
Wisconsin Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons (WAOPS)
Wisconsin Hospital Association
Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce
Wisconsin Medical Society
Wisconsin Rheumatology Association
Wisconsin State Grange
Wound Care Clinic - ESU
WPMA - Wisconsin Podiatric Medical Association
Wyoming Chapter American College Emergency Physicians
Wyoming Epilepsy Association
Wyoming Medical Society
Wyoming Ophthalmological Society
ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer