



January 3, 2018

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden:

On behalf of the Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC), I am writing to express our organization's enthusiastic endorsement of the nomination of Alex Azar to serve as the nation's next Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The members of HLC – hospitals, academic health centers, health plans, pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, biotech firms, health product distributors, pharmacies, laboratories, post-acute care providers, and information technology companies – are committed to advancing a consumer-centered healthcare system that values innovation, affordability, and accessibility. Because we know firsthand, since Mr. Azar was a member of HLC and participated on the organization's Executive Committee, that the nominee shares this vision for American healthcare, we believe unequivocally he will serve the people of this country well and faithfully as HHS Secretary.

Given the healthcare and disaster preparedness challenges facing our nation, it is important that HHS have a leader who can immediately take positive action and direct the federal government's largest civilian cabinet department. Mr. Azar has already served as General Counsel and Deputy Secretary of HHS. He played instrumental roles in implementing programs like Medicare Advantage and the Medicare Part D prescription drug programs that have improved the lives of tens of millions of Americans. He has firsthand leadership experience in mobilizing the assets of the federal government to respond to public health emergencies. The country will benefit from someone who knows how to effectively utilize the resources of HHS for the public good from the moment he is sworn into office.

As a leader in the private sector of healthcare, I can personally attest to Mr. Azar's dedication to ensuring that all Americans have affordable access to high-quality healthcare. In our Healthcare Leadership Council deliberations, he has always been a strong and consistent voice for value-focused health system reform that will eliminate health disparities, accelerate patient-centered innovation, and achieve greater cost-efficiency and system sustainability. He will not only be a conscientious steward of federal health programs like Medicare and Medicaid, but has the expertise to make these programs more effective agents for improved population health.

Where health policy is concerned, we are in the midst of an important period in history. The ability to access and better utilize data is creating the opportunity to deliver superior evidence-based healthcare to every American. New developments in the creation of medicines and medical technologies are enhancing our ability to overcome life-threatening illnesses. Innovative payment and delivery reforms are demonstrating how cost containment and quality improvement can work hand in hand. And we're achieving a greater understanding about social

determinants and their impact on health and well-being. To help shepherd this period of transformative change, HHS needs a knowledgeable, experienced leader and Mr. Azar clearly fits that description.

On behalf of HLC's members from every health sector, we strongly support this nomination and urge your committee's bipartisan approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary R. Greal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mary" being the most prominent.

Mary R. Greal
President