



February 20, 2020

The Honorable Terri Sewell
United States House of Representatives
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Adrian Smith
United States House of Representatives
502 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Tony Cárdenas
United States House of Representatives
2438 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Kurt Schrader
United States House of Representatives
2431 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable John Shimkus
United States House of Representatives
2217 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Brad Wenstrup
United States House of Representatives
2419 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Representatives Sewell, Smith, Cardenas, Schrader, Shimkus, and Wenstrup:

The Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC) strongly supports the bipartisan legislation you introduced on February 3, 2020. H.R. 5741, the “Strengthening Innovation in Medicare and Medicaid Act.” This legislation will maintain the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) as a valuable testing ground for new healthcare payment and delivery concepts while creating essential protections for patients and healthcare providers affected by CMMI demonstration projects.

HLC is a coalition of chief executives from all disciplines within American healthcare. It is the exclusive forum for the nation’s healthcare leaders to jointly develop policies, plans, and programs to achieve their vision of a 21st century healthcare system that makes affordable high-quality care accessible to all Americans. Members of HLC – hospitals, academic health centers, health plans, pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, laboratories, biotech firms, health product distributors, post-acute care providers, home care providers, and information technology companies – advocate for measures to increase the quality and efficiency of healthcare through a patient-centered approach.

During its first 10 years of operation, CMMI has demonstrated its considerable potential to identify valuable new models for delivering and financing healthcare. Yet, as it is currently structured, CMMI has generated controversy through proposed initiatives that come closer to broad changes in Medicare policy rather than true tests of new payment models. Additionally, these controversies have slowed CMMI’s progress in many ways and limited its positive impact.

Like you, HLC values CMMI as a vital mechanism to continue to bring greater value to healthcare delivery and believes that affordability for beneficiaries and sustainability of the Medicare and Medicaid programs are critically important priorities. H.R. 5741 serves several important purposes including instituting safeguards for CMMI by ensuring CMMI demonstrations are patient-focused and temporary, not permanent, with the continued option to expand successful models. Demonstration projects are not meant to have the kind of nationwide impact that would make them, in essence, a wholesale change in Medicare or Medicaid policy. This legislation maintains important testing while protecting patients and healthcare providers from harm if a new model has unforeseen and adverse impacts. In the long run, improving healthcare delivery and quality is the best way to achieve sustainable cost savings.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on ensuring CMMI operates as intended and develops value-based projects that protect patients and ensure access to efficient, high quality care. We offer our comments in support of the quality healthcare our members endeavor to deliver care to better the lives of beneficiaries, and stand at the ready to assist with moving H.R. 5741 forward toward enactment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary R. Grealy".

Mary R. Grealy
President

cc: Ways & Means Members
Energy & Commerce Members