

November 5, 2019

Dear Arkansas Congressional Delegation:

There are numerous healthcare proposals that are being discussed on Capitol Hill and the White House, some of which benefit patients and some that unfortunately have no benefit or are actually harmful to patients. Arkansas' seniors and those with disabilities should not have to worry about their elected officials restricting access to healthcare but rather be assured that their elected officials are protecting or bettering their healthcare.

Medicare Part D was created as a program to help seniors afford their prescription medicines, and it works well. Seniors spend less on prescription drugs and have better adherence which leads to improved health outcomes. There are two proposals that we support that will help patients and put more money back in their pockets. The first is an out-of-pocket cap on beneficiary spending in Medicare Part D. This will lower patient cost-sharing and make drugs in Part D even more affordable, while also ensuring access to a broad range of drugs. The second is to require pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to pass the savings from manufacturer rebates onto patients, which would bring costs down for patients at the pharmacy counter instead of leaving the savings with the middlemen.

There have been some concerning proposals introduced that do not put patients first. The first would allow the government to set prices in the Medicare marketplace, and beyond, which would replace the private market negotiations that currently occur. The private market negotiations have been largely credited with Part D's success in keeping costs low and access high. The second would institute foreign price controls which could lead to fewer options for providers and would not pass on any cost-savings to seniors.

We urge you to protect Arkansas' seniors by helping them maintain access to Medicare and save money on their healthcare, and to protect them by rejecting harmful proposals such as the international pricing index and government price setting. Thank you for your leadership and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

