

December 5, 2012

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Representative Pelosi:

As organizations representing the majority of the nation's physicians, we write to express our strong opposition to proposals that would eliminate the Medicaid primary care payment increase that was recently finalized in a final rule issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and scheduled to be implemented on January 1.

Elimination of this policy further burdens the already challenged Medicaid system of today. Patients will face obstacles to connecting with a patient-centered medical home and will be forced to rely on episodic, acute care services provided in other settings, foregoing the more cost-effective coordinated and preventive care services that primary care physicians provide. Policies aimed at improving access to physicians in the Medicaid program are strongly supported by our organizations because we understand that investments such as these lead to better quality of care for patients and decreased costs for state governments.

The Medicaid payment increase ensures that Medicaid payments for eligible physician services in all states are no less than Medicare, independent of whether a state has chosen to participate in the Medicaid expansion authorized by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). By doing so, it will improve access to care for persons enrolled in both the existing Medicaid program and persons who may become newly eligible for Medicaid in states that accept the federal dollars to expand Medicaid.

Over the past few years, our nation has taken significant steps towards improving access to health care for the uninsured and underinsured. A principal part of this effort has been the investment in primary care as the foundation of our nation's health care system. Expanding access to physicians, especially primary care physicians, is a priority for federal and state governments, as well as commercial insurance plans. Private and public health care systems are making this investment as a means of improving access to health care for patients and as a means of improving the overall quality and efficiency of care provided.

Our members are dedicated to working individually and collectively to ensure that all patients, including low-income working families who depend on Medicaid, have access to needed primary care services. However, many physicians do not participate in the Medicaid program due to poor payment rates that, historically, are well below the actual costs of providing care. This results in reduced access to care for the most vulnerable patients and higher costs to federal and state governments.

Although a principal goal of this Medicaid policy is to improve access to primary care, the policy also increases payments to many subspecialists in internal medicine and pediatrics, with the purpose of increasing participation and access to their services.

A key to achieving our joint goals of ensuring increased access and improved quality is ensuring that Medicaid and Medicare payment policies are aligned with the access and quality goals established by public and private health care systems. The Medicaid payment increase is an important policy that

attempts to better align payment rates with cost of care for primary care physicians, thus increasing access to primary care physicians for millions of Medicaid patients.

We urge you to oppose elimination of the Medicaid primary care payment increase.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
AMDA - Long Term Care Medicine  
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American College of Allergy Asthma and Immunology  
American College of Cardiology  
American College of Chest Physicians  
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
American College of Osteopathic Internists  
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Medical Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Infectious Disease Society of America  
Joint Council of Allergy Asthma and Immunology  
MEDNAX National Medical Group  
National Physicians Alliance  
North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition  
Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America  
Pediatrix Medical Group  
Renal Physicians Association  
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine  
Society for General Internal Medicine  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society of Hospital Medicine  
The Endocrine Society

Medical Association of the State of Alabama  
Alabama Academy of Family Physicians

Alabama Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Alabama Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Alaska State Medical Association  
Alaska Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Alaska Osteopathic Medical Association

Arizona Medical Association  
Arizona Academy of Family Physicians  
Arizona Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Arizona Osteopathic Medical Association  
Arizona Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Arizona Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

Arkansas Medical Society  
Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians  
Arkansas Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Arkansas Osteopathic Medical Association  
Arkansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

California Medical Association  
California Academy of Family Physicians  
California Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons of California  
California Chapter 1, American Academy of Pediatrics  
California Chapter 2, American Academy of Pediatrics  
California Chapter 3, American Academy of Pediatrics

Colorado Medical Society  
Colorado Academy of Family Physicians  
Colorado Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Colorado Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Colorado Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Connecticut State Medical Society  
Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians  
Connecticut Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Connecticut Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Delaware Academy of Family Physicians  
Delaware Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Delaware State Osteopathic Medical Society  
Delaware Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Medical Society of the District of Columbia  
District of Columbia Academy of Family Physicians  
District of Columbia Chapter, American College of Physicians  
District of Columbia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Florida Medical Association  
Florida Academy of Family Physicians  
Florida Chapter, American College of Physician  
Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Florida Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Medical Association of Georgia  
Georgia Academy of Family Physicians  
Georgia Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Georgia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Hawaii Medical Association  
Hawaii Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons

Idaho Medical Association  
Idaho Academy of Family Physicians  
Idaho Osteopathic Medical Association  
Idaho Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Illinois State Medical Society  
Illinois Academy of Family Physicians  
Illinois Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Illinois Chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Indiana Academy of Family Physicians  
Indiana Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Indiana Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Iowa Medical Society  
Iowa Academy of Family Physicians  
Iowa Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association  
Iowa Chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Iowa Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Kansas Medical Society  
Kansas Academy of Family Physicians  
Kansas Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Kentucky Medical Association  
Kentucky Academy of Family Physicians  
Kentucky Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Kentucky Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Louisiana State Medical Society  
Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians  
Louisiana Osteopathic Medical Association  
Louisiana Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Maine Medical Association  
Maine Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Maine Osteopathic Association  
Maine Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

MedChi-The Maryland State Medical Society  
Maryland Academy of Family Physicians  
Maryland Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Massachusetts Medical Society  
Massachusetts Academy of Family Physicians  
Massachusetts Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Massachusetts Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Michigan State Medical Society  
Michigan Academy of Family Physicians  
Michigan Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Michigan Osteopathic Association  
Michigan Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Minnesota Medical Association  
Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians  
Minnesota Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Minnesota Osteopathic Medical Society  
Minnesota Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Mississippi State Medical Association  
Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians  
Mississippi Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Mississippi Osteopathic Medical Association  
Mississippi State Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Mississippi Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Missouri State Medical Association  
Missouri Academy of Family Physicians  
Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons  
Missouri Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Missouri Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Montana Medical Association  
Montana Academy of Family Physicians  
Montana Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Montana Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Nebraska Medical Association  
Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians  
Nebraska Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Nebraska Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Nevada State Medical Association

New Hampshire Medical Society  
New Hampshire Academy of Family Physicians  
New Hampshire Chapter, American College of Physicians  
New Hampshire Osteopathic Association  
New Hampshire Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Medical Society of New Jersey  
New Jersey Academy of Family Physicians  
New Jersey Chapter, American College of Physicians  
New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Medical Society of the State of New York  
New York Chapter, American College of Physicians  
New York State Osteopathic Medical Society  
New York Chapter 1, American Academy of Pediatrics  
New York Chapter 2, American Academy of Pediatrics  
New York Chapter 3, American Academy of Pediatrics

New Mexico Medical Society  
New Mexico Academy of Family Physicians  
New Mexico Chapter, American College of Physicians  
New Mexico Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

North Carolina Medical Society  
North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians  
North Carolina Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
North Carolina Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

North Dakota Medical Association  
North Dakota Academy of Family Physicians  
North Dakota Chapter, American College of Physicians  
North Dakota Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Ohio State Medical Association  
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians  
Ohio Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Ohio Osteopathic Association  
Ohio State Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Oklahoma State Medical Association  
Oklahoma Osteopathic Association  
Oklahoma Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Oregon Medical Association  
Oregon Academy of Family Physicians  
Oregon Chapter, American College of Physicians

Pennsylvania Medical Society

Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians  
Pennsylvania Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association  
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Family Physicians Society  
Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Rhode Island Medical Society  
Rhode Island Academy of Family Physicians  
Rhode Island Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Rhode Island Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Puerto Rico Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

South Carolina Medical Association  
South Carolina Academy of Family Physicians  
South Carolina Chapter, American College of Physicians  
South Carolina Osteopathic Medical Society  
South Carolina Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

South Dakota State Medical Association  
South Dakota Academy of Family Physicians  
South Dakota Chapter, American College of Physicians  
South Dakota Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Tennessee Medical Association  
Tennessee Academy of Family Physicians  
Tennessee Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association  
Tennessee State Society of Osteopathic Family Physicians

Texas Medical Association  
Texas Academy of Family Physicians  
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association  
Texas Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Texas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Utah Medical Association  
Utah Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Vermont Medical Society  
Vermont Academy of Family Physicians  
Vermont State Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons  
Vermont Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Virginia Academy of Family Physicians  
Virginia Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association  
Virginia Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Washington State Medical Association

Washington Academy of Family Physicians  
Washington State Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Washington Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

West Virginia State Medical Association  
West Virginia Academy of Family Physicians  
West Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association  
West Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Wisconsin Medical Society  
Wisconsin Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Wisconsin Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Wyoming Medical Society  
Wyoming Chapter, American College of Physicians  
Wyoming Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

cc: United States House of Representatives