

April 21, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

We are writing today to support key provisions of the president's executive order, #13890, on *Protecting and Improving Medicare for Our Nation's Seniors*. The undersigned organizations and individuals represent a broad swath of providers, stakeholders and decisionmakers in the healthcare community who commend important provisions of this executive order. We recognize the urgent need to remove burdensome supervision and licensure requirements for non-physician providers. These essential reforms will help increase access to care, curb costs for patients, and improve healthcare delivery. We are writing to support you in your efforts as you work to implement the executive order.

We appreciate the administration's efforts to ensure that providers like advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician assistants (PAs) can practice to the full extent of their medical training and education and that patients are afforded the opportunity to see the provider of their choice. We strongly support the swift action the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) took in temporarily removing Medicare physician supervision requirements for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) and other unnecessary barriers for qualified advanced providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The patients benefitting from this move will serve as a positive example for permanently removing these barriers for all APRNs following the health crisis. Permanently removing these barriers will increase competition, network adequacy and make much needed reforms to the healthcare system. This order will ensure that all licensed providers are able to see their patients without undue burdens or unnecessary regulations that don't improve safety or patient outcomes.

In every setting and region, for every population, particularly among the rural and medically underserved, America's growing numbers of highly educated advance practice providers enhance healthcare access and quality improvement in the United States and promote cost-effective healthcare delivery. The order takes several important steps to ensure access to all providers, including removing the Medicare Part A physician supervision requirement that is overly burdensome to states and which many have already chosen to go through the onerous opt-out process. It also takes on issues of network adequacy to ensure that patients have access to providers, regardless of where they live.

All told, the changes sought in the order would ensure that patients are put first, that competition drives down costs through the removal of artificial and unnecessary barriers, and that providers of all types are able to better serve their patients. We support the effort of the administration in their order and stand ready to assist in implementing the critical reforms we have outlined. We know that we all share the same goal of reducing costs, increasing access and maintaining the highest quality in healthcare.

Sincerely,

American Academy of PAs
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American College of Nurse Midwives
Americans for Prosperity
Americans for Tax Reform
American Nurses Association
Center for a Free Economy
Center for Freedom and Prosperity
Citizens Against Government Waste
Competitive Enterprise Institute
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy
Digital Liberty
FreedomWorks
The Heartland Institute
Heritage Action for America
HSA Coalition
Independent Women's Forum
Independent Women's Voice
Less Government
National Rural Health Association
National Taxpayers Union
Taxpayers Protection Alliance
Texas Public Policy Foundation
60 Plus Association