

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2022

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 445-G
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

We write to express our strong bipartisan support for the Medicare Advantage program and the high-quality care it provides to 27 million older adults and people with disabilities with that number growing to nearly 30 million by the end of 2022.^{1,2} The number of Americans who choose Medicare Advantage continues to grow, with enrollment more than doubling over the last decade with more than 43 percent of Medicare beneficiaries choosing to enroll in Medicare Advantage today.³ We appreciate your ongoing commitment to preserve and strengthen Medicare Advantage for current and future older adults. As the Administration considers updates to the program for plan year 2023, we urge you to provide a stable rate and policy environment that ensure Medicare Advantage can continue to provide the affordable, high-quality, patient-centered coverage our constituents rely on every day.

Medicare Advantage provides older adults affordable, high-quality services, including care coordination, disease management programs, out-of-pocket spending limits, access to community-based programs, additional supplemental benefits such as vision and dental coverage, and often prescription drug coverage for no additional premium. Older adults on Medicare Advantage report consistent satisfaction with their coverage and quality of care.⁴ These ratings are driven by the access to enhanced benefits, innovative clinical care models, and greater financial protections that Medicare Advantage provides.

Medicare Advantage is providing high-quality care with 90% of enrollees in a plan with a quality rating of 4 or more stars.⁵ It consistently delivers better care and value that provides beneficiaries with more coordinated access to high-quality providers and lower avoidable hospital and emergency department visits.^{6,7} Importantly, Medicare Advantage helps provide a holistic approach to care through access to telehealth services, in-home care, and benefits that address health-related social needs such as food insecurity and transportation needs. This model demonstrates excellent health outcomes with 41% fewer avoidable acute inpatient hospital stays⁸ and studies showing higher rates of utilization of preventive services.⁹

Medicare Advantage also supports an increasingly diverse population with varied health and socioeconomic needs. Forty percent of Medicare Advantage enrollees make less than \$25,000 per

year.¹⁰ For 2022, the average monthly Medicare Advantage premiums will reach historical lows, even while the availability of supplemental benefits continues to increase.^{11,12} Racial and ethnic minorities eligible for Medicare also increasingly choose Medicare Advantage, with the greatest growth among Black and Hispanic enrollees.¹³

Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, Medicare Advantage serves some of the most at-risk and disproportionately affected populations. During the pandemic, Medicare Advantage enrollees experienced a 19% lower rate of hospitalization compared to original Medicare.¹⁴ As a result of care coordination and greater flexibility in plan benefit offerings, Medicare Advantage enrollees have more access to the care and support they need, as well as supplemental benefits that help them manage their health. This access to high-quality care has helped older adults and people with disabilities on Medicare Advantage stay healthy and safe throughout the pandemic.

We ask that the Administration provide a stable rate and policy environment for Medicare Advantage, including protecting important benefits such as programs focused on addressing health equity, in-home health risk assessments, and value-based insurance design. We are committed to ensuring that our more than 27 million constituents who rely on Medicare Advantage can count on stability in the program and do not face uncertainty about their benefits or premiums next year, and we are ready to protect the program from policies that would undermine this stability or the health outcomes of enrollees.

We look forward to partnering with you to ensure that, through Medicare Advantage, tens of millions of older adults continue to have access to comprehensive, affordable health coverage choices.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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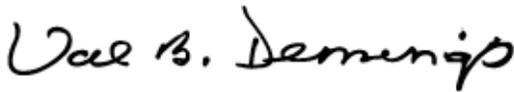
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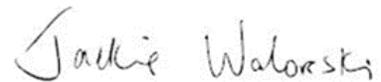
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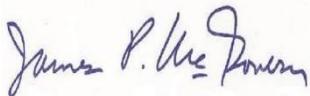
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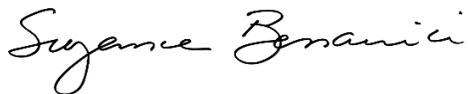
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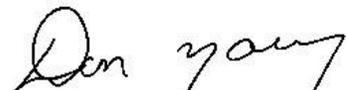
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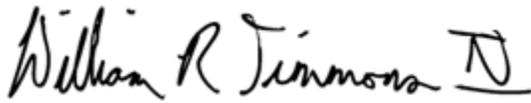
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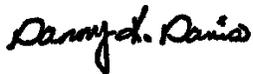
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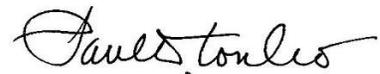
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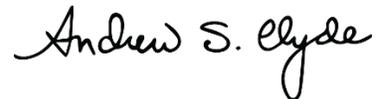
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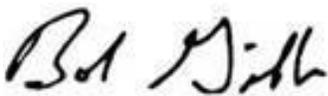
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