

September 21, 2016

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Fred Upton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth HOB  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth HOB  
Washington D.C. 20515

Chairman Hatch, Chairman Upton, Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Wyden, Ranking Member Pallone, and Ranking Member Levin,

The Patient Access to Pharmacists' Care Coalition (PAPCC) is a multi-stakeholder and interdisciplinary initiative whose mission is to develop and help enact a federal policy proposal that would enable patient access to, and payment for, Medicare Part B services by state-licensed pharmacists in medically-underserved communities. Membership is comprised of organizations representing patients, pharmacists, and pharmacies, as well as other interested stakeholders.

We write today to express support and gratitude for your efforts to improve the delivery of services in underserved communities. The Senate Finance Committee, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee have spent significant time in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress focused on expanding access to care in medically underserved communities and for those with chronic needs. Pharmacists offer unique skills and benefits that can help assist the health care team provide needed care, coordination, medication management, and other health care services that can improve outcomes for patients with chronic conditions at a value to Medicare.

As you know, individuals in underserved areas often struggle to access providers because of their geographic isolation or provider shortages in specific locales. Pharmacists can – and do – play important roles in working with physicians and other providers to help these patients access important services.

While pharmacists are best known for their commitment to dispensing prescription medications and helping patients use them safely, today's pharmacists are trained and licensed to provide a number of additional services needed by many Medicare beneficiaries. As part of the health care team, pharmacists can play an important role in addressing many of the areas your committees have focused on, including:

- Reforms to Medicare's current fee-for-service program that incentivize providers to coordinate care for patients living in underserved communities;
- Strategies to increase care coordination in urban and rural areas;
- Options for empowering Medicare patients to play a greater role in managing their health and meaningfully engaging with their health care providers; and
- Ways to more effectively utilize primary care providers and care coordination teams in order to meet the goal of maximizing health care outcomes for Medicare patients.

By utilizing pharmacists in the Medicare Part B benefit, you can expand access to care in urban, and rural areas, incentivize providers to coordinate care with pharmacists, empower seniors to access health care services at the local level, and encourage coordination teams that include pharmacists.

Scores of your colleagues have cosponsored the Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act (S. 314/H.R. 592) that would provide medical underserved beneficiaries with access to Medicare Part B services by pharmacists, consistent with state scope of practice law. We strongly encourage you to consider advancing S. 314/H.R. 592 in your respective committees.

Thank you, again, for your leadership in addressing the health care needs of underserved communities. We look forward to working with you to ensure that all Medicare beneficiaries have access to the care they need, specifically through pharmacist-provided care. Should you have any questions, please contact Vince Ventimiglia or David Lee at Leavitt Partners ((202) 774-1404).

Sincerely,

Albertson's LLC and New Albertson's Inc.  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Pharmacists Association  
American Society of Consultant Pharmacists  
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists  
AmerisourceBergen  
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved  
BI-LO Pharmacy  
Brookshire Brothers  
Cardinal Health  
CVS Health  
Food Marketing Institute  
Fruth Pharmacy  
Healthcare Distribution Alliance  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association  
International Academy of Compounding  
Pharmacists  
Kroger

League of United Latin American Citizens  
McKesson  
National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations  
National Association of Chain Drug Stores  
National Center for Farmworker Health  
National Community Pharmacists Association  
National Consumers League  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National Pharmaceutical Association  
National Rural Health Association  
Omniceil  
Pediatric Pharmacy Advocacy Group  
Rite Aid Pharmacy  
Safeway  
SUPERVALU Pharmacies  
Thrifty White Pharmacy  
Walgreens  
Walmart  
Winn-Dixie Pharmacy