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October 31, 2017

The Honorable Phil Roe, MD  
US House of Representatives  
1319 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Roe:

I write to inform you of our support for the “Protecting Seniors’ Access to Medicare Act of 2017” (HR 849). This legislation would repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) established under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI), which represents the nation’s osteopathic internists and medical subspecialists, is committed to assisting our members’ efforts to provide high-quality care and to ensuring that our patients have access to this care at the time it is needed. Continuation of the IPAB puts at risk the care of Medicare beneficiaries by establishing a mechanism that would allow for fundamental changes to Medicare outside of the standard legislative process.

The IPAB would allow for the reduction of Medicare reimbursements and other reforms, absent congressional involvement, by vesting certain powers in a non-elected panel appointed by the President. The panel is empowered to provide recommendations to reduce Medicare spending once an arbitrary growth rate is exceeded. In the event that the panel is not named, the powers would be vested in the Department of Health and Human Services. The process threatens the ability of physicians to provide Medicare services to current beneficiaries at the time care is needed and will challenge the ability of physician to provide care to new Medicare beneficiaries in the future. It is for this reason that the ACOI supports HR 849 and repeal of the IPAB established under the ACA.

Our members are unified in their concern for their patients and their ability to access needed health care services. We look forward to working with you and support enactment of the “Protecting Seniors’ Access to Medicare Act of 2017” to further ensure Medicare beneficiaries maintain access to needed health care services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. C. Burke".

Martin C. Burke, DO, FACOI  
President