January 8, 2024

The Honorable Greg Murphy
United States House of Representatives
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Danny Davis
United States House of Representatives
2159 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brad Wenstrup
United States House of Representatives
2335 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
United States House of Representatives
304 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Burgees
United States House of Representatives
2161 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Murphy, Davis, Wenstrup, Panetta, Burgees, and Bucshon,

On behalf of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), alongside the 40 undersigned osteopathic specialty and state associations collectively representing more than 186,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, we write to express our support for the Preserving Seniors’ Access to Physicians Act (H.R. 6683). This bipartisan legislation would fully prevent the pending cuts to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) due to take effect on January 1, 2024. Enactment of this legislation would prevent further harm to the financial stability of physician practices and would allow them to continue providing essential care to Medicare beneficiaries, ensuring patients can maintain access to timely and high-quality care.

Physicians nationwide are currently facing a 3.37% payment cut for seeing Medicare beneficiaries, continuing the year over year payment cuts that threaten to fundamentally alter the care delivery landscape in the United States. While the annual payment cuts and uncertainty impact all physicians, it disproportionately affects DOs and the patients we serve. Despite being 11% of physicians in the United States, DOs comprise 40% of physicians practicing in medically underserved areas. Moreover, the sustainability of independent physician practices is foundational to ensuring adequate patient access to primary care services in rural and underserved communities. Analysis of Medicare Trustees data found that inflation-adjusted Medicare payments to clinicians have decreased by 26% from 2001-2022, and the impact will only become more severe as payment cuts are compounded by CMS’ estimated 4.6% increase in practice costs for next year.¹

As physicians continue to struggle with rising practice costs, workforce shortages, and other economic factors, any payment reduction jeopardizes the viability of physicians’ practices and patients’ ability to access care. Year over year payment reductions underscore the need for Congress to work towards comprehensive physician payment reform that takes the true cost of practice administration into account. While comprehensive reform is important in the long term, legislation to avoid the looming MPFS cut presents an existential need in the short term. The Preserving Seniors’ Access to Physicians Act would provide essential stability and clarity to physicians while ensuring continued access to the care our senior citizens need.

¹ Analysis of Medicare Trustees and CBO Reports: Medicare Updates Compared to Inflation.
Again, the AOA and our affiliates stand ready to assist you in securing the enactment of this important legislation. If you have any questions or if the AOA can be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact John-Michael Villarama, MA, AOA Vice President of Congressional Affairs and Public Policy, at jvillarama@osteopathic.org or (202) 349-8748.

Sincerely,

American Osteopathic Association
American Academy of Osteopathy
American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Osteopathic Neurologists and Psychiatrists
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians
American College of Osteopathic Surgeons
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine
American Osteopathic College of Anesthesiologists
American Osteopathic College of Occupational and Preventive Medicine
American Osteopathic College of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Osteopathic College of Radiology
American Osteopathic Colleges of Ophthalmology & Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

Delaware State Osteopathic Medical Society
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association
Idaho Osteopathic Physicians Association
Illinois Osteopathic Medical Society
Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association
Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine
Louisiana Osteopathic Medical Association
Maine Osteopathic Association
Michigan Osteopathic Association
Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
New Jersey Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
New Mexico Osteopathic Medical Association
New York State Osteopathic Medical Society
New Hampshire Osteopathic Association
North Carolina Osteopathic Medical Association
Oklahoma Osteopathic Association
Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons of California
Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons of Oregon
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Associations
Tennessee Osteopathic Medical Association
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association
Utah Osteopathic Medical Association
Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association
Washington Osteopathic Medical Association
West Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association