

October 2, 2017

Dear [Senator/Representative]:

Despite its track record of success in improving both patient access to medications and treatment adherence, the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) or Extra Help program is once again at risk of being altered. Proposed changes to the program could ultimately endanger the health outcomes of already vulnerable patients. Therefore, we strongly urge you to oppose any proposals that would weaken the LIS program for patients who rely on it.

Under Medicare Part D, the LIS program helps low-income beneficiaries afford brand and generic prescription drugs. More than 11 million Medicare beneficiaries rely on this program to access needed medications, including more than 6 million that are dual eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. Unfortunately, some in Congress, as well as the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), have proposed changes, including decreasing subsidies for brand medicines used by LIS and dual eligible beneficiaries in the hopes of cutting costs. If implemented, these changes would place the most vulnerable enrollees in the Part D program at great risk.

For one, patients that already rely on brand medications for clinical reasons would see an increase in their out-of-pocket costs in order to maintain their current treatments. It could also force medical providers to alter treatment options for beneficiaries eligible for LIS. These changes would limit patient access to crucial medications and force unnecessary changes to treatment plans that are working. Worse, changes to treatment plans can lead to a decline in adherence, which in turn can increase long-term health issues and hospitalizations among LIS beneficiaries who stop taking their medicines or take less effective medicines. If adherence decreases as a result of these changes, Medicare costs could increase over time rather than decrease.

Low-income Medicare beneficiaries living with multiple chronic medical conditions are certain to be negatively impacted by such changes to the LIS program. As organizations that represent Medicare beneficiaries, particularly those living with serious medical conditions, we know that our constituents are more likely to rely on specific treatment regimens that are tailored to the individual complexities of their disease or comorbidities. To identify the correct combination of medications, flexibility and a wide range of options are critical.

Allowing misguided changes to the LIS program would decrease access to treatment and disrupt care for the vulnerable patients who depend on them. Therefore, we encourage you to place patient needs first by opposing harmful changes to the LIS program and protecting Medicare Part D.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

AIDS United

Alliance for Aging Research

Alliance for Patient Access

American Association on Health and Disability

American Behcet's Disease Association (ABDA)

American Kidney Fund

Arthritis Foundation
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Caregiver Action Network
Dementia Alliance International
Disability Power & Pride
Epilepsy Foundation
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.
HealthHIV
Healthy Women
Institute for Educational Leadership
Long Term Care Community Coalition
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of America
Men's Health Network
Multiple Sclerosis Foundation
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Black Justice Coalition
National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Inc.
National Black Nurses Association
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Consumers League
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Down Syndrome Society
National Grange
National Infusion Center Association (NICA)

National LGBTQ Task Force
National MS Society
National Osteoporosis Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices
Prevent Blindness
RetireSafe
Salud USA
The AIDS Institute
The Arc of the United States
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
The Veterans Health Council
U.S. Pain Foundation
U.S. Rural Health Network
United Cerebral Palsy
Vietnam Veterans of America
ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer

Alabama

Alabama Council for Behavioral Health
Epilepsy FD of Alabama
Lakeshore Foundation
NAMI Alabama
Positive Maturity, Inc.
Survivors Cancer Action Network
The Disabilities Leadership Coalition of Alabama (DLCA)

Alaska

NAMI Alaska
NAMI Fairbanks Inc.
NAMI Juneau

Arizona

Arizona Hemophilia Association

Aunt Rita's Foundation

Crossroads Inc.

Epilepsy Foundation of Arizona

Joe Niekro Foundation

NAMI Southern Arizona

St. Joseph the Worker

Valle Del Sol

Arkansas

Lupus Foundation of Arkansas, Inc.

NAMI Arkansas

California

California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

Combined Health Agencies

Community Health Action Network

Cystic Fibrosis Research, Inc.

Embracing Latina Leadership Alliances (ELLAS)

Epilepsy California

Healthy African American Families

Healthy Heritage

Latino Diabetes Association

Los Angeles Wellness Station

Lupus Foundation of Southern California

Lupus LA

Mexican American Opportunity Foundation

NAMI

NAMI

NAMI San Mateo County

ONEgeneration

Partners in Care Foundation

South Asian Network

The G.R.E.E.N. Foundation

The Wall Las Memorias Project

Colorado

Colorado Gerontological Society

Let's Talk about Change

NAMI Colorado

Peer Coach Academy Colorado

Connecticut

Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut

Delaware

Epilepsy Foundation of Delaware

NAMI Delaware

Florida

Alzheimer's & Dementia Resource Center

Central Florida Behavioral Health Network

Epilepsy Association of Big Bend

Epilepsy Association of Central Florida

Epilepsy Foundation of Florida

Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

H.E.A.L.S. of the South

Lupus Foundation of Florida

NAMI Florida

NAMI Hernando

Sickle Cell Disease Association of Florida

Sickle Cell Foundation

United Partners for Human Services

US Rural Healthcare

Georgia

Advocates for Responsible Care (ARxC)

The Senior Citizens Council

Idaho

Caribou County Senior Center

Garden Valley Senior Center

National Patient Advocate Foundation

Recovery Idaho, Inc.

Illinois

Center for Healthcare Innovation

Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago

NAMI Illinois

NAMI Southwestern Illinois

Rush To Live

Indiana

Epilepsy Foundation of Indiana

Iowa

Epilepsy Foundation of Iowa, North/Central Illinois, Nebraska

Iowa State Grange

NAMI Greater Des Moines

NAMI Iowa

Kansas

American Stroke Foundation

NAMI Kansas

Kentucky

Epilepsy Foundation of Kentuckiana

Kentuckiana Stroke Association

Kentucky Life Science Council

Twisted Pink

Louisiana

Louisiana Association for Behavioral Health

NAMI New Orleans

New Orleans Council on Aging

Maryland

NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore

Massachusetts

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter

Easter Seals Massachusetts

Epilepsy Foundation New England

Lupus Foundation New England

Massachusetts Independent Pharmacists Association

Michican

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA)

Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

Michigan Biosciences Industry Association (MichBio)

Michigan Lupus Foundation

Michigan Psychological Association

Minnesota

Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota

Medical Alley Association

Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians

NAMI Minnesota

Relapsing Polychondritis Awareness and Support Foundation Inc.

Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota

Mississippi

NAMI Mississippi

Missouri

Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri

NAMI St. Louis

Southwest Center for Independent Living

Epilepsy Foundation of Missouri & Kansas

Montana

Brain Injury Alliance of Montana

Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow

Mental Health America of Montana

Montana BioScience Alliance

NAMI Montana

Rocky Mountain Health Network

Nebraska

Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska

Community Health Charities of Nebraska

NAMI Nebraska

The Kim Foundation

Nevada

Epilepsy Foundation of Nevada

New Hampshire

AIDS Response Seacoast

New Jersey

Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey

New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.

New Mexico

NAMI Dona Ana County

NAMI New Mexico

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Association of New Mexico

New York

Epilepsy Foundation of Metropolitan New York

Epilepsy Foundation of Metropolitan New York

Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York

International Institute for Human Empowerment

Lupus Alliance of Upstate New York

Mental Health Association in Essex County

Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.

NAACP New York State Conference

NAMI Buffalo & Erie County

NAMI New York City Metro

NAMI Orange County, NY

NAMI Rochester

NAMI Syracuse Inc.

New York State Association for Rural Health

New York Statewide Senior Action Council

North Country Behavioral Healthcare Network

NYS Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare

Southern Tier AIDS Program

The Healthcare Consortium

US Pain Foundation Inc.

North Carolina

Epilepsy Foundation of North Carolina

North Dakota

NAMI North Dakota

North Dakota Autism Connection

North Dakota Rural Health Association

Womenheart Jamestown

Ohio

Access Center for Independent Living (ACIL)

Cancer Support Community Central Ohio

Equitas Health

Fairhill Partners

Mental Health America of Franklin County

National Association of Social Workers Ohio Chapter

Ohio Association of Foodbanks

Ohio Psychological Association

Ohio Sickle Cell and Health Association

Ohio State Grange

Prescription Assistance Network of Stark County, Inc.

Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate

Oklahoma

Epilepsy Foundation of Oklahoma

NAMI-Oklahoma

Oregon

Cascade AIDS Project

NAMI Oregon

One in Four Chronic Health

Pennsylvania

NAMI of PA Bucks County

The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration

South Carolina

Mental Health America of South Carolina

NAMI Charleston

NAMI of the Pee Dee

NAMI South Carolina

South Carolina Advocates for Epilepsy

South Carolina BIO

South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance

South Dakota

Brain Injury Alliance of South Dakota

NAMI Sioux Falls

NAMI South Dakota

South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities

South Dakota United for Hope and Recovery

Tennessee

Brain Injury Association of Tennessee

Epilepsy Foundation of East Tennessee

NAMI Tennessee

Nashville CARES

Texas

Alliance of Independent Pharmacists

Alzheimer's Association Capital of Texas

American Foundation for Women's Health

BioHouston

Centro de mi Salud

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

Easterseals Central Texas

Easterseals Greater Houston

Easterseals North Texas

Easterseals Rio Grande Valley

Epilepsy Foundation of Central & South Texas

Epilepsy Foundation of Texas-Houston/Dallas-Fort Worth/West Texas

It's Time Texas

Lupus Foundation of America, Lone Star Chapter

Mental Health America of Greater Houston

Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas

NAMI Greater Houston

NAMI Texas

National Association of Hispanic Nurses Houston

National Association of Social Workers - Texas Chapter

Rio Grande Valley Diabetes Association

Rio Grande Valley Partnership

Startech International Ltd.

Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute

Texas Renal Coalition

Texas Renal Coalition

Utah

Epilepsy Foundation of Utah

Gay Men Aloud

NAMI Utah

SAGE Utah

Vermont

Epilepsy Foundation of Vermont

NAMI Vermont

Virginia

American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry

Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens

Jefferson Area Board for Aging

LOA

Local Office on Aging

Local Office on Aging - Roanoke

Mental Health America

National Council on Aging

Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation

Washington

Epilepsy Foundation Northwest

Garden Valley Senior Center

NAMI Southwest Washington

West Virginia

Bioscience Association of West Virginia

Charleston Parkinson's Support Group

Mountain Mission Inc.

Wisconsin

Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin

BioForward Wisconsin

Epilepsy Foundation Heart of Wisconsin

NAMI Wisconsin

Wisconsin Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons

Wyoming

Healthworks

Wyoming Epilepsy Association

Wyoming State Advocates in Leadership