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September 20, 2022

The Honorable Ami Bera, MD
172 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, MD
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Bera and Bucshon,

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN), the world's largest association of neurologists representing 38,000 professionals, is strongly committed to improving the care and outcomes of persons with neurologic illness in a cost-effective manner. One in six people live with a brain or nervous system condition, including Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, ALS, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, and headache.

The AAN writes to express our support for H.R. 8800, the Supporting Medicare Providers Act of 2022. Your legislation provides critical relief from the scheduled -4.42 percent budget neutrality cut in Medicare physician fee schedule payments that is scheduled for January 1, 2023. Your legislation also provides an important acknowledgement of the need for considerable structural reforms to ensure financial stability and predictability in the Medicare physician payment system.

The AAN has deep concerns about the mounting financial instability of the Medicare physician payment system. This instability is due to many factors beyond the determinantal impacts of budget neutrality including the lack of inflationary updates, significant administrative barriers, and the cumulative impact of the pandemic.

While these challenges are significant, they are not insurmountable. The American Medical Association's "Characteristics of a Rational Medicare Payment System" provide an outline of potential future reforms focused on increasing simplicity, relevance, alignment, and predictability. We look forward to working with you and other key stakeholders to enact the critical short-term relief provided in H.R. 8800, followed by more structural reforms in the new Congress.

Thank you for your continued leadership focused on ensuring that physician practices around the country remain economically viable and available to serve patients in their communities. If you have any questions or requests for additional information, please contact Derek Brandt, Director of Congressional Affairs at dbrandt@aan.com. We look forward to working with you as we all strive to care for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Orly Avitzur, MD, MBA, FAAN
President, American Academy of Neurology