



September 25, 2014

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The Honorable Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
U.S. Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Brown and Murray:

On behalf of the Society of General Internal Medicine (SGIM), I am writing to express our support for the Ensuring Access to Primary Care for Woman & Children Act. This legislation will help ensure access to vital primary care services delivered to this nation's most vulnerable citizens, by extending the payment rates under Medicaid to the level of Medicare rates through 2016. SGIM is comprised of approximately 3,500 general internists who provide clinical services and conduct research and educational activities to improve the health of adults, often with multiple complex, chronic conditions.

SGIM's members are responsible for providing primary care services to many of this country's most vulnerable populations who are eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare. It is through this experience that we recognize how critical it is for Congress to pass this legislation before the end of the year to ensure continued funding of the Medicaid pay parity for the provision of primary care and immunization services by physicians practicing internal medicine and certain internal subspecialties, family medicine and pediatrics. With 65 million Americans enrolled in Medicaid, receiving Medicare-level reimbursement rates for these services helps attract physicians to participate in the program and ensures greater access to primary care services for these beneficiaries. Studies show that access to primary care is associated with better outcomes and lower costs. Patients who do not have access to primary care physicians tend to delay getting needed care and often end up seeking more expensive care in emergency rooms.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We will work with you to ensure this legislation advances before the end of the year.

Sincerely,

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William P. Moran, MD, MS