Dear Representative:

As a practicing allergist, I am writing to urge you to support Congressional intervention to ensure that Medicare payments to physicians and other healthcare professionals are sufficient to cover the cost of providing care.

I and other healthcare professionals face unsustainable cuts in Medicare fee-schedule payments beginning January 1, 2023, unless Congress intervenes to prevent those cuts. The combination of payment cuts due to the 2023 physician fee schedule adjustments, the Medicare sequester and the statutory Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) Act (payment cuts due to the American Rescue Plan), will be devastating if allowed to take effect.

The combined impact of this “perfect storm” of payment cuts means that all health care professionals could face Medicare payment reductions of at least 9%! **Congress must act before the end of the year to avert these cuts.** ***Congress must also include an extension of the 3% payment adjustment Congress approved last year.***

These cuts come before any payment adjustments that allergists receive under the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) or Advanced Alternative Payment Models (Advanced APM). The 2023 performance year for these programs is the first without dedicated funding for the MIPS exceptional performance bonus and the 5% lump sum bonus for qualifying APM participants. Performance in these programs is the only way for providers to receive increases to their Medicare payments. The expiration of this funding makes it much more difficult for participating clinicians to earn meaningful positive payment adjustments. **Congress should restore funding for these bonus payments. Congress should also provide regular positive adjustments to the physician fee schedule conversion factor** so that providers are less reliant on performance in these programs for positive payment adjustments.

Healthcare professionals face these cuts despite record inflation which has increased our overhead costs well beyond what we are reimbursed by Medicare and other health payers. We also must invest more resources towards compliance with administratively burdensome regulations like the No Surprises Act’s Good Faith Estimate and Advanced EOB requirements.

The Medicare population is among the most vulnerable in the United States. The continued reductions to reimbursement and increase in burdens will force many health care providers to close their doors, leaving seniors without access to important healthcare services. Your support for ensuring physicians and other health professionals receive Medicare payments - sufficient to cover the cost of providing care to these patients - is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to call on me if you need any additional information or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

I.M. Allergy, MD