



March 24, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman, Finance Committee
U.S. Senate Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid and Senator Wyden,

Community Catalyst is writing to express support for the Medicare SGR Repeal and Beneficiary Access Improvement Act of 2014 (S. 2110). Our organization shares with you a commitment to advancing the economic and financial security of older adults, people with disabilities and their families. The Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula is fundamentally flawed and permanent changes to the Medicare reimbursement system that will emphasize value over volume are long overdue. We are encouraged by the policies reflected in S. 2110 that will replace the current volume-based payment system with one that rewards quality, efficiency and innovation.

We also believe that it would not be in the best interest of Medicare beneficiaries to pay for an SGR package by increasing the burden of health care costs for people with Medicare, a large proportion of whom have very modest means and also already contribute substantially to the cost of their health care. We support moving ahead on a permanent SGR solution, along with key extenders, without the inclusion of offsets that would make Medicare unaffordable for beneficiaries, jeopardize access to needed care, or worsen the already tenuous economic circumstances facing most people with Medicare. We believe that unspent Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds represent a responsible offset option.

Finally, we appreciate that S. 2110 includes many important extender policies, such as Transitional Medical Assistance, The QI program, Extension of Pediatric Quality Measure Development, SNP reauthorization and Express Lane Eligibility. However, we continue to urge that several of these "extenders", such as QI and Express Lane, be made permanent.

Again we appreciate your work in this area and encourage you to continue to pursue a permanent solution with appropriate offsets that do not undermine the health or economic security of older adults.

Sincerely,

Robert Restuccia