

June 4, 2021

The Honorable Suzan DelBene
U.S. House of Representatives
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Kelly
U.S. House of Representatives
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ami Bera
U.S. House of Representatives
172 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon
U.S. House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives DelBene, Kelly, Bera and Bucshon:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinical partners – including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers – and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) writes in support of the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act of 2021 (H.R. 3173). Your bipartisan legislation would establish requirements for the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans.

Prior authorization is a tool that can help align patients' care with their health plan benefit structure and facilitate alignment with clinical best practices when used appropriately. However, these processes vary widely among health plans and insurers, and the lack of standardization can be confusing and burdensome for providers. Unfortunately, certain health plan utilization management practices can, when poorly structured or implemented, create unnecessary delays in care that can negatively affect patients.

America's hospitals and health systems are committed to ensuring patient access to the highest quality care in a timely manner. Your bill seeks to streamline and improve prior authorization processes, which would help providers spend more time on patients, instead of paperwork. We commend you for your focus on this important issue and look forward to working with you to make improvements to the prior authorization process to ensure patient access.

Sincerely,

/s/

Stacey Hughes
Executive Vice president

