

July 15, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell:

As representatives of our nation's health care providers, we are writing to express our concerns about potential offsets that were included in the bipartisan infrastructure framework. Our providers have worked tirelessly to deliver the best care for patients, families and communities since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and they continue to provide care and comfort to areas of the country that are seeing increasing caseloads and surges of new variants.

Americans rely on hospitals and health systems, physicians, skilled nursing facilities, hospice and home care to care for them and maintain their health. We understand that addressing core infrastructure needs can allow us to continue to serve our communities and our patients. However, we are opposed to the use of an extension of mandatory Medicare sequestration as a pay-for in any infrastructure package. Additionally, we do not believe that Medicare funds should be used to pay for non-health care programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has persisted in parts of the country, infecting more than 33 million people and resulting in more than 607,000 deaths. America's health care providers continue to face historic challenges. Physicians, nurses, hospitals and health systems, long-term care hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, and hospices have incurred significant expenses to test, vaccinate and treat the sick. Extending sequestration imposes a destabilizing element to health care access in the face of years of experience with cost increases that are not adequately accounted for in Medicare payments.

The inclusion of the continuation of the mandatory Medicare sequestration in the bipartisan infrastructure framework as an offset for the agreement is not something we can support, and we ask you to remove it from the list of possible pay-fors. Health care providers cannot sustain additional cuts to the Medicare program.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. We look forward to continuing to work with you during this critical time.

Sincerely,

American Hospital Association
American Medical Association
American Health Care Association
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
Association for Clinical Oncology