



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

July 26, 2022

The Honorable Richard Neal
Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady,

On behalf of the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), I want to thank you for bringing the “Improving Seniors Timely Access to Care Act” to the Ways & Means Committee for a vote. We are encouraged by this important next step on this crucial legislation. As you know, this bill would reform the burdensome prior authorization process under Medicare Advantage (MA) by making the process electronic and transparent, to ensure patients receive timely access to critical health care services.

Prior authorization approval is currently required for a wide range of services under MA and commercial insurance plans. This process, while intended to control costs, can delay, or deny medically necessary care and negatively influence patient outcomes. The application of prior authorization has grown indiscriminately, adding to the amount of time physicians must spend negotiating with insurance companies and taking away from time spent on patient care.

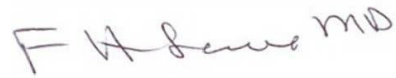
In April 2022, the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human services released a report that found MA plans inappropriately denied tens of thousands of requests for care that should be covered under the program¹. This report comes on the heels of a 2021 physician survey from the American Medical Association that found 34% of physicians say that prior authorization has led to a serious adverse event- such as hospitalization, disability, permanent bodily damage, or death- for a patient in their care, and 85% of physicians describe the burden associated with prior authorization as high or extremely high². The AAOS believes this legislation will help decrease the burden associated with prior authorizations and allow patients to receive the care they need without unnecessary delays.

¹ *Some Medicare Advantage Organization Denials of Prior Authorization ...* <https://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/OEI-09-18-00260.pdf>.

² *Ama Prior Authorization (PA) Physician Survey.* <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/prior-authorization-survey.pdf>.

Thank you for prioritizing this bipartisan, bicameral legislation within the Ways & Means Committee. The AAOS has been a long-time advocate for this legislation, and we look forward to working with you to ensure it is successfully passed out of Committee and signed into law. Thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "F H Savoie MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Felix H. Savoie, III, MD, FAAOS
AAOS President

cc: Kevin J. Bozic, MD, MBA, FAAOS, AAOS First Vice-President
Paul Tornetta, III, MD, FAAOS, AAOS Second Vice President
Thomas E. Arend, Jr., Esq., CAE, AAOS CEO
Graham Newson, AAOS Vice President, Office of Government Relations