



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

December 19, 2023

The Honorable Greg Murphy, MD
United States House of Representatives
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Danny Davis
United States House of Representatives
2159 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brad Wenstrup, DPM
United States House of Representatives
2335 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
United States House of Representatives
304 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Burgess, MD
United States House of Representatives
2161 Rayburn House Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, MD
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Murphy, Davis, Wenstrup, Panetta, Burgess, and Bucshon:

On behalf of the more than 39,000 orthopaedic surgeons and residents represented by the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), I write to express our strong support for H.R. 6683, the Preserving Seniors' Access to Physicians Act. This bipartisan legislation is urgently needed to prevent the full 3.37% Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) cuts from being implemented on January 1, 2024.

As the only part of the healthcare system without an annual inflation-based payment update, the physician community—and all Medicare Part B healthcare professionals subject to the MPFS—continues to find itself stuck in a cycle of rising practice costs and decreasing Medicare payment rates. With the cost of running a practice, as measured by the Medicare Economic Index, projected to increase 4.6% next year, any additional financial headwinds could push physicians and their practices into a make-or-break situation. Smaller, independent, and rural practices could face impossible choices as to how they can meet their obligations to pay staff salaries and office rent, purchase essential technology, and attend to ever-increasing administrative burdens.

Over the past four years, the healthcare workforce has seen an unprecedented level of burnout that is driving many healthcare professionals to consider reducing their hours or even leaving healthcare altogether.¹ If Congress fails to stop this cut, Medicare payments will have been cut by almost 10% over that same period, which is simply unsustainable for our nation's healthcare system. Declining Medicare

¹ [https://www.mcpiqjournal.org/article/S2542-4548\(21\)00126-0/fulltext](https://www.mcpiqjournal.org/article/S2542-4548(21)00126-0/fulltext)

payment also risks accelerating consolidation in healthcare, which could negatively impact patients' access to the full range of essential services, including primary and specialty care.

While our community appreciates the flurry of recent legislative proposals for much-needed structural change to Medicare payment, the reality is that we do not have the time to wait for these proposals to take root. We applaud your leadership in meeting the urgent need to ward off this impending cut and protect Medicare for our nation's seniors. AAOS is proud to support H.R. 6683. We look forward to working with Congress to swiftly enact this vital legislation and to continue the broader effort to reform Medicare's payment system and break this yearly cycle. Please feel free to contact Catherine Hayes at hayes@aaos.org if you have any questions or if the AAOS can further serve as a resource to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KTB' with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin J. Bozic, MD, MBA, FAAOS
AAOS President

cc: Paul Tornetta, III, MD, PhD, FAAOS, AAOS First Vice President
Annunziato Amendola, MD, FAAOS, AAOS Second Vice President
Thomas E. Arend, Jr., Esq., CAE, AAOS Chief Executive Officer
Graham Newson, AAOS Vice President, Office of Government Relations