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The NRLN advocates the rights of more than 2 million American retirees from...

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September 5, 2023

The Honorable Vern Buchanan, Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Health
U.S. House of Representatives
2110 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0916

Dear Chairman Buchanan:

On behalf of the more than 2 million members of the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN), I am requesting that you call for votes in the Subcommittee on Health on two bills:

H.R.2377, Saving Access to Laboratory Services Act (SALSA), and **H.R.2474, Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act**.

H.R.2377 would address what has been years of deep Medicare payment cuts, while updating Medicare's payment system to ensure clinical laboratory services are sustainable. Between 2017 and 2022, payment for some common tests for diseases like diabetes, cancer, and heart disease were cut by 27%. The next round of Medicare cuts would lower reimbursements up to another 15% for about 800 laboratory tests used to screen and manage many serious diseases. It is essential that Congress protect patients by acting this year to fix the Medicare payment model for clinical diagnostic tests.

H.R.2474, would address payment uncertainty affecting Medicare-participating physicians and avoid a possible physician shortage for Medicare beneficiaries. **H.R. 2474** would change the physician payment rate above the current law by providing an annual Medicare physician payment update tied to inflation, as measured by the Medicare Economic Index (MEI). The Medicare Trustees and MedPAC have called for legislation to address the Medicare physician payment system by providing an annual inflation-based update tied to the Medicare Economic Index (MEI). A March 2023 report from the Medicare Trustees states that the trustees "expect access to Medicare-participating physicians to become a significant issue in the long term" unless Congress takes steps to bolster the payment system.

If you would like to learn more about why NRLN supports these two bills, please contact me or Alyson Parker, NRLN Executive Director in Washington, DC, at parkerstrategies@gmail.com or call 813-545-6792.

Sincerely,

Bill Kadereit, President

National Retiree Legislative Network

Email: bkad@sbcglobal.net Phone: 972-722-5928