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July 1, 2024

The Honorable Mike Crapo, Ranking Member
 Committee on Finance
 United States Senate
 239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510-1205

Dear Senator Crapo:

On behalf of the more than 2 million members of the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN), I am requesting that you support calling for votes in the Committee on Finance on the following four bills:

S.3109, Alleviating Barriers for Caregivers (ABC) Act would require the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Social Security Administration (SSA), and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to review their eligibility, processes, procedures, forms, and communications to reduce the administrative burden on family caregivers. The legislation would then annually require CMS, SSA and CHIP to report to Congress about any issues they are facing and any next steps they are taking to support family caregivers.

More than 48 million family caregivers serve as a primary source of support for seniors and people with disabilities of all ages. One in four family caregivers have said they want help with forms, paperwork and eligibility for services.

S.3832, Alternatives to Prevent Addiction in the Nation (PAIN) Act would provide greater access to non-opioid treatments for pain management for seniors by making new opioid alternatives and others currently on the market available for Medicare Part D beneficiaries.

Too often, Medicare Part D makes it unaffordable for seniors to get non-opioid pain relievers and forces them to settle for a prescription with a higher risk of addiction and overdose. This bill would remove these barriers so that seniors are able to choose the treatment that is best for them.

S.3967, Telehealth Modernization Act of 2024 would permanently extend telehealth, which expires on December 31, 2024. Passage of this bill will ensure permanent access to federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics. By increasing telehealth access and providing certainty about its future, more patients, particularly seniors and those in rural areas, will be able to access timely, high-quality care.

S.4137, Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act of 2024 would update a current loophole in Medicare policy to help protect seniors from high medical costs for the skilled nursing care they require after hospitalization. Passage of the bill would allow for the time patients spend in the hospital under “observation status” to count toward the requisite three-day hospital stay for coverage of skilled nursing care.

Under the current Medicare policy, a beneficiary must have an “inpatient” hospital stay of at least three days in order for Medicare to cover post-hospitalization skilled nursing care. Patients that receive hospital care under “observation status” do not qualify for this benefit, even if their hospital stay lasts longer than three days.

If you would like to learn more about why NRLN supports these 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

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