



October 6, 2017

The Honorable Devin Nunes
United States House of Representatives
1013 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Terri Sewell
United States House of Representatives
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Nunes and Representative Sewell:

On behalf of the more than 12,000 chief fire and emergency medical services (EMS) officers of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the 305,000 professional fire fighters of the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the 65,000 members of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, thank you for introducing the Comprehensive Operations, Sustainability, and Transport Act of 2017 (H.R. 3729). Our organizations are pleased to support H.R. 3729 which will bring greater predictability to the future of the Medicare Ground Ambulance Add-On Payments (Add-On Payments) as well as create a cost reporting system which will generate the data necessary to reform Medicare's Ambulance Fee Schedule (Fee Schedule). We encourage Congress to pass H.R. 3729 at the earliest opportunity.

Our organizations are pleased to support H.R. 3729, which will provide two important improvements to the Fee Schedule. H.R. 3729 provides a five-year reauthorization for the Add-On Payments. These payments help bridge the gap between CMS' reimbursements and the actual costs of providing care. This long-term reauthorization will provide predictability for this important source of reimbursements. Additionally, H.R. 3729 will create a cost-reporting system which will generate the data needed to comprehensively reform and improve the Fee Schedule. Our organizations recognize that education and training will be essential in order to comply with the new cost reporting requirements of this legislation. However, we believe that cost-reporting data will demonstrate the significant gap between CMS ambulance reimbursement and the actual costs that fire departments and other EMS agencies incur when providing EMS care to Medicare beneficiaries. The data generated by these cost reports will be crucial in reforming the Fee Schedule and to reimburse fire departments and other EMS agencies fully for services such as providing patient care on scene, as well as reimbursement for transport to alternate destinations of care. These improvements will strengthen efforts by fire departments and other EMS agencies to continue providing emergency medical care to all members of their communities.

Thank you again for working diligently with industry stakeholders to develop H.R. 3729. Our organizations are grateful for your efforts to improve pre-hospital emergency medical care. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support fire departments and other EMS agencies in your districts and across the United States.

Sincerely,



Fire Chief Thomas C. Jenkins V
President and Chairman of the Board
International Association of Fire Chiefs



Harold Schaitberger,
General President
International Association of Fire Fighters



Dennis Rowe, EMT-P
President
National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians

CC: Representative Kevin Brady, Committee on Ways and Means, Chairman
Representative Richard Neal, Committee on Ways and Means, Ranking Member