December 4, 2019

Rep. Mark Green, MD
533 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Shalala Morelle Sign-On Letter Addressing Surprise Medical Billing

Dear Representative Green:

On behalf of nearly 9,500 physician members of the Tennessee Medical Association (TMA), I am asking you to sign on to the letter currently being circulated to Congress by Reps. Joseph D. Morelle, Donna Shalala, and Phil Roe supporting the inclusion of independent dispute resolution in any legislation addressing surprise medical billing passed in the House of Representatives. Time is of the essence if you have not already signed on as the deadline is close of business December 5. This is because the Speaker is contemplating including surprise billing legislation in a potential year-end legislative package that will be acted on in a few days.

The inclusion of an independent review process has been one of the major sticking points during the debate as to how to alleviate the surprise billing problem. In contrast to the health insurance industry, those who deliver care want at least an opportunity to receive fair payment if they feel like the health plan’s reimbursement rate is too low. All parties agree that the experiences with such systems in New York and Texas have worked and saved patients millions.

Patients benefit from legislation such as H.R. 3502, which includes an independent review process, because they pay no more than they would if their healthcare provider had been in-network and they are taken out of the middle in any dispute between the provider and health insurance company.

Alternative proposals only benefit big health insurance companies by giving them more leverage and incentive to fix prices and threaten to compromise access to care by further reducing the size of their provider networks. Tennessee doctors want to see the end of overwhelming medical bills for their patients but want fair treatment from health plans with which they contract. Please let Maria Oparil in Rep. Morelle’s office know that you support the principles outlined in Rep. Shalala and Morelle’s letter on surprise medical billing. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Russ Miller, CAE
CEO