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February 12, 2024

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: American Medical Association support for proposed changes to provider directory requirements under Medicare Advantage

Dear Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Crapo:

On behalf of the physician and student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I write in support of your proposed changes to provider directory requirements under Medicare Advantage (MA). The AMA has long been concerned by provider directory errors across all health plans, including MA plans. Dozens of studies over the last decade looking at the scope of the provider directory problem have found serious inaccuracies with physicians' locations, physicians' network status, physicians' availability to accept new enrollees, and physicians' specialties.

Inaccurate directory information can have severe financial consequences for patients, placing the burden on them to invest significant time in finding an in-network provider or facing the expense of out-of-network care. Additionally, the resulting delays in care can negatively impact patients' health outcomes. Moreover, in the long run, continuing to allow inaccuracies makes it easier for plans to fail to build networks that are adequate and responsive to enrollees' needs.

As such, the AMA appreciates your specific legislative proposals to address these inaccuracies through more frequent verification of directory information, increased transparency and reporting requirements related to directory accuracy, and greater beneficiary protections from the financial implications of directory inaccuracies. Your legislation recognizes that multi-stakeholder solutions are needed, but ultimately accurate directories are a basic function and responsibility of health plans offering MA products.

The AMA appreciates the time and attention you have brought to this important issue and stands ready to work with you and your colleagues toward enactment of these provider directory proposals.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD