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January 27, 2017

The Honorable Erik Paulsen
U.S. House of Representatives
127 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Paulsen and Blumenauer:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for H.R. 365, the "Primary Care Enhancement Act of 2017." This bill would help to increase patient access to primary care physicians.

This legislation would remove legal barriers that currently prevent patients with health savings accounts (HSAs) from receiving care from primary care physicians practicing in a Direct Primary Care (DPC) arrangement. DPC is an alternative to the traditional fee-for-service primary care practice model. DPC practices offer patients the full range of comprehensive primary services, including routine care, regular checkups, preventive care, and care coordination and comprehensive care management in exchange for a flat, recurring retainer fee that is typically billed to patients on a monthly basis. This type of arrangement can benefit patients by providing savings and a greater degree of access to, and time with, physicians.

H.R. 365 would remove a barrier under existing tax law by allowing patients with HSAs to freely contract with physicians for DPC services. In addition, the bill would explicitly allow periodic provider fees paid to a primary care physician for a defined set of primary care services to be treated as qualified medical care under the tax code, rather than as a form of insurance. By clarifying current tax language, more patients would be able to choose the DPC model for their primary care.

Thank you for your leadership in introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James L. Madara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James L. Madara, MD