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September 24, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Scott
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Chairman Neal, and Chairman Scott:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I want to express our appreciation for your leadership and efforts to address the high cost of prescription medications. Price increases for brand pharmaceuticals and biologicals continue to outpace the rate of inflation, limiting affordability and access for our patients. Furthermore, higher prices lead to insurers using increasingly onerous utilization management programs that erect additional barriers to access, raise patient out-of-pocket costs, and add administrative hurdles for both patients and stressed physician practices.

The AMA supports efforts to redesign the Medicare prescription drug benefit to ensure appropriate alignment of incentives and cost sharing while also ensuring Medicare beneficiaries have access to medically necessary treatment. We also support tailoring subsidization of prescription medication for Medicare patients based on financial need. In addition, the AMA has policy that supports drug price negotiation as well as efforts to address medication price increases that outpace inflation.

Your plan demonstrates that Congress is serious about addressing these growing concerns and to ensure that patients have access to affordable medications. We look forward to working with you and urge Congress to pass meaningful legislation this year to achieve these goals.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD