

March 19, 2021

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

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

Dear Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Crapo:

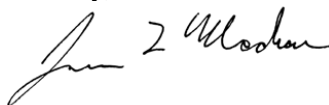
The American Medical Association (AMA) strongly supports Ms. Chiquita Brooks-LaSure for the position of Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Ms. Brooks-LaSure is extremely qualified and has dedicated much of her career to government service. She has also worked throughout her career to strengthen and improve our nation's health care system. This experience and leadership across many arms of the federal government makes Ms. Brooks-LaSure the ideal person to lead CMS at this most crucial time.

During her tenure at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Ms. Brooks-LaSure was immersed in projects such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and health care coverage for the uninsured. Moving from OMB to the House Committee on Ways and Means, Ms. Brooks-LaSure became an expert in Medicare issues and was a pivotal resource during the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act. Once enacted, Ms. Brooks-LaSure transitioned from the House and assumed a leading role in the implementation of the ACA under the Obama Administration as Deputy Director in the Office of Health Reform at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Later, Ms. Brooks-LaSure assumed the role as Deputy Director for Policy in the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (CCIIO). Her time spent at CCIIO is a critical factor to her unique qualification for the CMS Administrator position. At CCIIO, Ms. Brooks-LaSure helped implement the complicated aspects of the ACA as well as the establishment of the Health Insurance Marketplaces. Therefore, she knows the inner workings of CMS and she understands the complexities of state specific platforms to guide individuals through open enrollment, partner outreach, cost and quality comparisons.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which our physicians have seen their practices upended by unexpected cancellations coupled with grueling delivery of life-saving services to those battling the virus, we have great faith in Ms. Brooks-LaSure to address the strains to the Medicare system, especially physician workforce and payment issues, as well as patient quality and care concerns. The AMA looks forward to supporting Ms. Brooks-LaSure as CMS Administrator as she fortifies the health of some of the most marginalized in our society--the elderly, the disabled, children, and minoritized individuals.

The AMA recognizes the superb qualifications of Ms. Brooks-LaSure, coupled with the historic nature of her pending appointment as the first African American woman to serve as CMS Administrator. The AMA urges the Senate to confirm this appointment immediately and looks forward to working with Ms. Brooks-LaSure for "the betterment of public health."

Sincerely,



James L. Madara, MD