April 25, 2013

Dear Member of Congress:

The organizations listed below represent a breadth of entities including all sectors of the healthcare industry, employers of different sizes and geographic locations, as well as purchasers of care, consumers and patients. We all share the conviction that the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) will not only severely limit Medicare beneficiaries' access to care but also increase healthcare costs that are shifted onto employers and working men and women in the private sector. While we all recognize the need for more sustainable healthcare costs, we do not believe IPAB is the way to, or will, accomplish this goal.

As you know, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA [P.L. 111-148]) created IPAB, a board appointed by the President and empowered to make recommendations to cut spending in Medicare if its spending growth reaches certain arbitrary levels. IPAB will have unprecedented power with little oversight, even though it has the power to literally change laws previously enacted by Congress. Further, the law specifically prohibits administrative or judicial review of the Secretary's implementation of a recommendation contained in an IPAB proposal.

We are deeply concerned about the impact IPAB will have on patient access to quality healthcare. The bulk of any recommended spending reductions will almost certainly come in the form of payment cuts to Medicare providers. This will affect patient access to care and innovative therapies. In the past five years for which data is available, the number of physicians unable to accept new Medicare patients because of low reimbursement rates has more than doubled. According to an American Medical Association survey, current reimbursement rates have already led 17 percent of all doctors, including 31 percent of primary care physicians, to restrict the number of Medicare patients in their practices. In all likelihood, IPAB will only exacerbate this problem.

While we are all supportive of improving the quality of care in this country, we are concerned that IPAB will not be able to focus on improving healthcare and delivery system reforms, as some of its proponents have suggested. Requiring IPAB to achieve scoreable savings in a one-year time period is not conducive to generating savings through long-term delivery system reforms. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation issue brief, "[w]hile the requirement to achieve Medicare savings for the implementation year provides a clear direction and target for the Board, it may discourage the type of longer-term policy change that could be most important for Medicare and the underlying growth in health care costs, including delivery system reforms that MedPAC and others have recommended which are included in the ACA – and which generally require several years to achieve savings. If these delivery system reforms are not 'scoreable' for the first year of implementation, the IPAB may be more likely to consider more predictable, short-term scoreable savings, such as reductions in payment updates for certain providers." The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has in fact stated that the Board is likely to focus its recommendations on changes to payment rates or methodologies for services in the fee-for-service sector by non-exempt providers. Again, this will have a severe, negative impact on Medicare beneficiaries.

Last, we believe that IPAB sets a dangerous precedent for overriding the normal legislative process. Congress is a representative body that has a duty to legislate on issues of public policy. Abdicating this responsibility to an unelected and unaccountable board removes our elected officials from the decision-making process for a program that millions of our nation's seniors and disabled individuals rely upon, endangering the important dialogue that takes place between elected officials and their constituents. Moreover, if the Board is never made operative, a provision in PPACA transfers IPAB's power to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, concentrating the enormous power in the hands of one individual.

We do not believe IPAB is the right way to achieve savings in Medicare and strongly urge Congress to eliminate this provision.

Sincerely,

A Partnership of Diabetics (A-POD)

Access Network

Action CF

ActionAIDS

AdvaMed

Advanced Cancer Therapeutics

Advocates for Responsible Care

AIDS Alliance

AIDS Outreach Montana

AIDS Response Seacoast

AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region

Alabama Council for Community Mental Health Boards

Alabama Disabilities Leadership Council

Alabama Family Trust

Alabama Hospital Association

Alabama JobKeeper Alliance

Alabama Lifespan Respite Resources Network

Alabama Podiatric Medical Association

Alaska Podiatric Medical Association

Alaska State Grange

Alder Health Services, Inc.

Allergy and Asthma Foundation, Texas Chapter

Alliance Community Services

Alliance of Specialty Medicine

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin

Alzheimer's Arkansas

Alzheimer's Association - Oklahoma and Arkansas Chapter

Alzheimer's Dementia & Resource Center (ARDC)

American Academy of Dermatology Association

American Academy of Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

American Academy of Neurology

American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases

American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists

American Association of Clinical Urologists

American Association of Neurological Surgeons

American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

American Association of Orthopaedic Executives

American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association

American College of Emergency Physicians

American College of Emergency Physicians – Indiana Chapter

American College of Mohs Surgeons

American College of Osteopathic Surgeons

American College of Radiology

American College of Surgeons

American College of Surgeons - Missouri Chapter

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American Liver Foundation - Allegheny Division

American Medical Association (AMA)

American Osteopathic Association

American Physical Therapy Association

American Podiatric Medical Association

American Society of Anesthesiologists

American Society of Breast Surgeons

American Society of Cataract and Refractory Surgeons

American Society of Plastic Surgeons

American Society of Radiation Oncology

American Urological Association

Americans for Prosperity

Americans for Prosperity, Florida Chapter

Amigos por la Salud

Arches Natural Products, Inc.

Arizona Podiatric Medical Association

Arizona Urological Society

Arkansas Medical Society

Arkansas Orthopaedic Society

Arkansas Podiatric Medical Association

Arthritis Association of Louisiana

Asian Americans for Community Involvement

Associated Industries of Missouri

Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, Inc.

Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America - New England Chapter

AZBio – the Arizona BioIndustry Association

BayBio

BEACON (Biomedical Engineering Alliance & Consortium, Hartford, CT)

Bingham County Senior Citizens Center, Inc.

Bio Nebraska Life Sciences Association

BIOCOM

BioForward

BioHouston

BioNJ

BioOhio

Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

BioUtah

Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce

Blue Ribbon Advocacy Alliance

Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions

California Black Health Network

California Healthcare Institute (CHI)

California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

California Medical Association

California Orthopaedic Association

California Podiatric Medical Association

California Rheumatology Alliance

California Senior Advocates League

California Urological Association

Cambridge Chamber of Commerce

Campbell Clinic

Cardiology Advocacy Alliance

Center for Mental Health

Center of the American Experiment

Central Florida Behavioral Health Network

Christian Coalition of Alabama

Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

Colorado Bioscience Association

Colorado Gerontological Society

Colorado Podiatric Medical Association

Colorado Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Colorado Springs Health Partners

Combined Health Agencies

Commonwealth Neurological Society

Community Health Charities of Florida

Community Health Charities of Iowa

Community Health Charities of Nebraska

Community Health Charities of Wisconsin

Community Oncology Alliance

Congress of Neurological Surgeons

Connecticut Podiatric Medical Association

Connecticut United for Research Excellence (CURE)

Council for Affordable Health Coverage

D'Souza and Associates

Delaware Academy of Medicine

Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families

Delaware HIV Consortium

Delaware Podiatric Medical Association

Delaware Public Health Association

Des Moines WomenHeart

Dia de la Mujer Latina

Diabetes Dayton

Disabled Rights Action Committee

District of Columbia Podiatric Medical Association

Docs 4 Patient Care

East Cooper Community Outreach

Easter Seals

Easter Seals Arkansas

Easter Seals Iowa

Easter Seals of Central Texas

Easter Seals of Massachusetts

Easter Seals of Southeastern PA

Easter Seals UCP North Carolina and Virginia

Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome Network

Elder Care Advocacy Florida

Elderserve

Embracing Latina Leadership Alliances (ELLAS)

Endometriosis Association

Epilepsy California of San Diego County

Epilepsy Foundation of East Tennessee

Epilepsy Foundation of Western Wisconsin

Familia Unida - Living With Multiple Sclerosis

Filipino American Service Group, Inc. (FASGI)

First Step House

FirstLight Senior Care

Florida Academy of Family Physicians

Florida Allergy, Asthma & Immunology Society, Inc

Florida Partners in Crisis

Florida Podiatric Medical Association

Florida Society of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery

Florida Society of Neurology

Florida Society of Rheumatology

Florida Society of Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgeons

Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Florida Transplant Survivors Coalition

Florida Urological Society

Georgia Association for Home Health Agencies, Inc.

Georgia Bio (GaBIO)

Georgia Orthopaedic Society

Georgia Podiatric Medical Association

Global Genes Project

Global Healthy Living Foundation

Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce

Granite State Taxpayers

Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce

Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce

GuardiaCare

H.E.A.L.S. of the South

Hawaii Podiatric Medical Association

Hayden Senior Gems

HealthCare Institute of New Jersey (HINJ)

Healthcare Leadership Council

Healthcare Navigators

HealthHIV

Healthy African American Families II

Healthy Heritage Movement

Hematology Oncology Society of Ohio

Hemophilia Foundation of Oregon

Idaho Podiatric Medical Association

Idaho State Grange

Illinois Biotechnology Industry Organization—iBIO®

Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Illinois Manufacturers' Association

Illinois Podiatric Medical Association

Independent Medical Providers Action Council of Oklahoma

Indiana Association of Cities and Towns

Indiana Chamber of Commerce

Indiana Podiatric Medical Association

Instructive Visiting Nurse Association

Interamerican College of Physicians and Surgeons

International Autoimmune Arthritis Movement

International Institute for Human Empowerment

Iowa Biotechnology Association

Iowa Orthopaedic Society

Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association

Iowa Podiatric Medical Association

Iowa State Grange

It’s About Me Breast Cancer Awareness Association

JDRF, Utah Chapter

Jefferson Council on Aging

Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine

Kansas Bio

Kansas Podiatric Medical Association

Kansas State Grange

Kansas Urological Association
Kentucky Bio Alliance
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Kentucky Medical Association
Kentucky Podiatric Medical Association
KeyVive
Kidney Cancer Association
Large Urology Group Practice Association
Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Utah
Latino American Chamber of Commerce of Connecticut
Leadership Jefferson County
Leading Age Texas
License Professional Counselors Association of Georgia
LifeScience Alley
Louisiana Podiatric Medical Association
Lupus Alliance of America - Long Island/Queens Affiliate
Lupus Alliance of America - New York Southern Tier Affiliate
Lupus Alliance of America - Upstate New York Affiliate
Lupus Foundation of America DC/MD/VA Chapter
Lupus Foundation of America, Arkansas Chapter
Lupus Foundation of America, Memphis Area Chapter
Lupus Foundation of Florida
Lupus Foundation of Genesee Valley NY, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of Mid and Northern New York
Lupus Foundation of Northern California
Lupus Foundation of Pennsylvania
Lupus Foundation of Southern California
Lupus Research Institute National Coalition
Maine Osteopathic Association
Maine Podiatric Medical Association
Malecare Cancer Support
Manufacture Alabama

Maryland Podiatric Medical Association

Massachusetts Association for Mental Health

Massachusetts Association of Behavioral Health Systems

Massachusetts Biomedical Initiatives

Massachusetts Health Council

Massachusetts Medical Device Industry Council (MassMEDIC)

Massachusetts Podiatric Medical Association

MassBio

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society

Medical Association of Georgia

Medical Association of the State of Alabama

Medical News

Medical News for You

Medical Society of Northern Virginia

Medical Society of the State of New York

MedTech

Memphis Medical Society

Men's Health Network

Mental Health Association of Nebraska

Mental Health Systems

MichBio (Michigan Biosciences Industry Association)

Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians

Michigan Chamber of Commerce

Michigan College of Emergency Physicians

Michigan Health & Hospital Association

Michigan Lupus Foundation

Michigan Orthopaedic Society

Michigan Osteopathic Association

Michigan Podiatric Medical Association

Michigan Society of Anesthesiologists

Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance

Minnesota Podiatric Medical Association

Minnesota State Grange
Mississippi Podiatric Medical Association
Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
Missouri Biotechnology Association (MOBIO)
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Missouri Podiatric Medical Association
Montana Chamber of Commerce
Montana Manufacturing Council
Montana Orthopaedic Society
Montana Podiatric Medical Association
Montana State Grange
NAMI California
NAMI Colorado
NAMI Florida
NAMI Georgia
NAMI Indiana
NAMI Iowa
NAMI Kansas
NAMI Kentucky
NAMI Maine
NAMI Maryland
NAMI Massachusetts
NAMI Michigan
NAMI Missouri
NAMI Nebraska
NAMI New Hampshire
NAMI North Carolina
NAMI Ohio
NAMI Oklahoma
NAMI Oregon
NAMI San Antonio
NAMI Sioux Falls

NAMI South Dakota

NAMI St. Louis

NAMI Utah

NAMI Virginia

NAMI Wyoming

NAMI-KC

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

National Association for Home Care & Hospice

National Association for Uniformed Services

National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)

National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs

National Association of Social Workers, North Carolina Chapter

National Association of Spine Specialists

National Associations of Social Workers South Dakota

National Catholic Bioethics Center

National Catholic Partnership on Disability

National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare

National Council of Negro Women Inc., Los Angeles View Park Section, Southern California Area

National Hemophilia Foundation, Idaho Chapter

National Kidney Foundation Serving Ohio

National LGBT Cancer Project

National Minority Quality Forum

National Parkinson Foundation serving Central and Southeast Ohio

National Psoriasis Foundation

National Spasmodic Torticollis Association

NCBio

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Nebraska Kidney Association

Nebraska Podiatric Medical Association

Nebraska Rural Health Association

Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom

Neurologique
Nevada Podiatric Medical Association
New Hampshire Podiatric Medical Association
New Hampshire State Grange
New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology (NJAO)
New Jersey Podiatric Medical Society
New Mexico Podiatric Medical Association
New York Podiatric Medical Association
New York State Rheumatology Society
New Zion Community Advocates, Inc.
Norman Chamber of Commerce
North Carolina Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
North Carolina Chamber of Commerce
North Carolina Podiatric Medical Association
North Carolina Psychological Association
North Dakota Medical Association
North Dakota Podiatric Medical Association
North Dakota Policy Council
North Idaho AIDS Coalition
Northeast Kidney Foundation
Northern Utah Coalition, Inc
Northwest Urological Society
Ohio Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Ohio Association of Ambulatory Surgery Centers
Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities
Ohio Chamber of Commerce
Ohio Foot & Ankle Medical Association
Ohio Ophthalmological Society
Ohio Podiatric Medical Association
Ohio State Grange
Ohio State Medical Association
Ohio Veterans United

Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology
Oklahoma Bioscience Association
Oklahoma Osteopathic Association
Oklahoma Physical Therapy Association
Oklahoma Podiatric Medical Association
Oklahoma Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Oklahoma Society of Anesthesiology
Oklahoma Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
Oklahoma State Medical Association
Oklahoma State Orthopedic Society
Old North State Medical Society
Oregon Bioscience Association
Oregon Medical Association
Oregon Pediatric Society
Oregon Podiatric Medical Association
Oregon Rheumatology Alliance (ORA)
Oregon Society of Anesthesiologists
Oregon Urological Society
Oregon Urology Institute
Parkinson's Association of San Diego
Partnership for a Drug-Free North Carolina
Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease
Pennsylvania BIO
Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry
Pennsylvania Podiatric Medical Association
Perennial Services Network
PhRMA
Platte Institute for Economic Research
Plaza Community Services
Pocatello Senior Citizen Center
Premier healthcare alliance
Prevent Blindness Iowa

Prevent Blindness Mid-Atlantic

Prevent Blindness Ohio

Prince George's County Medical Society

Publix Northwest

PUENTES New Orleans

Renal Support Network

RetireSafe

Rhode Island Podiatric Medical Association

Rio Grande Foundation

Rio Grande Valley Diabetes Association

Rocky Mountain Stroke Center

Rush To Live

S.L.E. Lupus Foundation

SAGE Utah

SC BIO

Senior Citizen's Council of Greater Augusta

Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging

Senior Hospitality Center

Sickle Cell Disease Association of Florida

Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation

Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

Society for Vascular Surgery

Society of Gynecologic Oncology

South Carolina Medical Association

South Carolina Orthopaedic Association

South Carolina Podiatric Medical Association

South Carolina Urological Association

South Dakota Biotech Association

South Dakota Orthopaedic Society

South Dakota Osteopathic Society

South Dakota Podiatric Medical Association

South Dakota State Medical Association

South Jersey Geriatric Care PC

South Jersey Senior Networking Group

Southeast Georgia Communities Project

Southeastern Medical Device Association (SEMDA)

Southern States Chapter of the American Associates of Clinical Endocrinologists

Southwest Michigan Pharmacist Association

State of Texas Kidney Foundation

Tennessee Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Tennessee Association of Health Underwriters

Tennessee Medical Association

Tennessee Men's Health Network

Tennessee Neurosurgical Society

Tennessee Orthopaedic Society

Tennessee Podiatric Medical Association

Tennessee Radiological Society

Tennessee Society of Anesthesiologists

Vietnam Veterans of America, Tennessee State Council

Texas Association for Home Care & Hospice

Texas Association of Business (TAB)

Texas BioAlliance

Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute (TCCRI)

Texas Healthcare & Bioscience Institute (THBI)

Texas Hospital Association

Texas Neurological Society

Texas Osteopathic Medical Association

Texas Podiatric Medical Association

Texas Senior Advocacy Coalition

Texas Urological Society

The AIDS Institute

The Center for Health Care Services

The Jewish Federations of North America

The National Grange

The Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

The Wall Las Memorias Project

Transplant Survivors Coalition of Florida

Twin Falls Senior Center

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Pain Foundation

UCP of Huntsville & Tennessee Valley, Inc

Utah Advocates

Utah Black Chamber of Commerce

Utah Business Development Association

Utah Podiatric Medical Association

Utah Pride Center

Utah Supports Advocates for Recovery Awareness

Vermont Podiatric Medical Association

Veterans Health Council

VHA Inc.

Vietnam Veterans of America

Virginia Biotechnology Association

Virginia Chamber of Commerce

Virginia Podiatric Medical Association

Visiting Nurses Association of Ohio

Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association (WBBA)

Washington Osteopathic Medical Association

Washington State Podiatric Medical Association

Washington State Prostate Cancer Coalition

Washington State Urology Society

West Virginia Orthopaedic Society

West Virginia Podiatric Medical Association

Wisconsin Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Wisconsin Hospital Association

Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce

Wisconsin Podiatric Medical Association

Wisdom of Wellness Project

Women Against Prostate Cancer

Women of Faith and Hope, Inc.

Wyoming Epilepsy Association

Wyoming State Grange