

December 13, 2020

## AHA Sends Letter to Leaders of Congressional Committees Commenting on No Surprises Act

The AHA this afternoon sent a letter to leaders of congressional committees commenting on the No Surprises Act, bipartisan, bicameral legislation released on Friday by House and Senate Committee leaders to address surprise medical bills. “We appreciate that this issue is a priority for you, as it is for our field and our patients,” AHA wrote to leaders of the House Ways and Means Committee, House Energy and Commerce Committee, House Education and Labor Committee, and Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

In the letter, AHA said, “We agree with you that it is essential to prohibit balance billing in certain scenarios and to limit patients’ obligation to their in-network cost-sharing responsibilities. We strongly support provisions to protect the patient from surprise medical bills. Once the patient is protected, hospitals and health systems should be permitted to work with health plans to determine appropriate reimbursement, as is provided for in your bill. As you know, we strongly oppose approaches that would impose arbitrary rates on providers, which could have significant consequences far beyond the scope of surprise medical bills and impact access to hospital care, particularly in rural communities. However, we urge you to consider several modifications to the dispute resolution process to reduce burden on all parties and ensure fair consideration of offers.

“We also would like to commend you for not including in the legislation certain provisions extraneous to the surprise medical billing issue, such as those related to privately negotiated contracts, which would lead to narrower provider networks with fewer choices for patients. However, we have significant concerns with several of the provisions that would attempt to implement unworkable billing processes and transparency provisions that are duplicative and costly without clear added benefit for patients.

“Finally, we ask that any savings associated with this legislative initiative be directed to those providers that are on the front lines of treating COVID-19 patients, such as hospitals, physicians and nurses.”

**Download the [AHA letter](#) for more information on the issues the committees should consider as they move forward with the legislative process. And see yesterday’s [Special Bulletin](#) for a summary of the legislation.**

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have questions, please contact AHA at 800-424-4301.