



February 26, 2020

The Honorable James Sensenbrenner  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Kind  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gwen Moore  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Pocan  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Glenn Grothman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Gallagher  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bryan Steil  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of Wisconsin's House Delegation:

Thank you for meeting with our delegation of rural health care leaders on February 12. As a follow-up to our discussions on surprise billing, **we write today to urge you to cosponsor H.R. 5826, the Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020.**

We were very pleased to see Representatives Kind and Moore vote to approve this legislation in the House Ways & Means Committee on Feb 12. We were likewise very pleased to see Representative Grothman vote against competing legislation the day before in the House Education and Labor Committee, H.R. 5800, the Ban Surprise Billing Act. That legislation would use government-set benchmark rates to resolve instances of surprise billing, and would have unintended consequences for patients and the hospitals who care for them.

We have long held the position that any solution to surprise medical billing must protect patients while preserving Wisconsin's high-quality, high-value health care system. We believe H.R. 5826 strikes the right balance between protecting patients while preserving free market negotiations between providers and insurers and keeping both parties on an even playing field. It is also the approach favored by most Wisconsinites. A poll done in August of 2019 by Fabrizio, Lee & Associates found that 75% of Wisconsinites support this approach, while only 6% support using a benchmark rate to fix surprise billing disputes.<sup>1</sup>

As you know, Wisconsin has a proud tradition of supporting efforts to promote transparency. Every hospital in our state has reported price and quality information through the websites PricePoint and CheckPoint since 2004. These tools allow consumers to find data on the prices and quality of care provided by hospitals, giving them tools to better understand the value of health care services before they schedule them. The PricePoint website also includes an insurance checklist to help patients determine out-of-pocket costs and avoid surprise medical bills. This commitment to transparency, along with Wisconsin's highly integrated health care environment and competitive insurance market, has led to our state already having one of the lowest rates of surprise billing in the country.

The Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020 would offer consumers additional protections while preserving Wisconsin's nation-leading health care environment. As Congress looks to address this issue in the coming months, we believe it is the right proposal to address this issue, and encourage you to cosponsor it.

Sincerely,



Eric Borgerding  
President and CEO, WHA



Tim Size  
Executive Director, RWHC

cc. Senator Ron Johnson  
Senator Tammy Baldwin

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<sup>1</sup> The Hill. (2019) *EXCLUSIVE: Swing-state voters oppose 'surprise' medical bill legislation, Trump pollster warns*. Retrieved from: <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/461780-exclusive-swing-state-voters-oppose-surprise-medical-bill-legislation-trump>. Jonathan Easley