December 20, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the American Academy of Dermatology Association (Academy), which represents more than 13,500 dermatologists nationwide, I write to express concern regarding developments that have the potential to have a negative impact on Medicare reimbursements to physicians and on patients’ access to care.

The Academy is concerned about reports that legislation to extend certain Medicare provisions would offset the costs of these measures through an added extension of the “misvalued codes” policy. The policy, which targets certain physician services for Medicare payment reductions, was formally enacted as a provision of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) in 2014. Even before enactment, the physician community contributed to the efforts to identify misvalued services for the better part of the preceding decade. Through these efforts, many physician services were identified and were revalued. As a result, a further extension of the misvalued codes policy would likely result in an across-the-board reduction in Medicare payments to physicians. It is for this reason that the Academy opposes inclusion of an extension of the “misvalued codes” policy in any legislation.

Furthermore, the Academy is concerned about the possibility of additional Medicare payment reductions that could be required under the additional sequester of Medicare funds resulting from the enactment of tax reform legislation. As you know, sequester cuts of 2 percent per year are already required through 2025. On behalf of our members and in order to preserve patients’ access to care, it is essential that Congress act to ensure that additional sequester cuts do not take effect next year or in future years.

With the added regulatory burdens facing dermatologists through the implementation of the reforms under the Medicare Access & CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA), dermatologists already face significant burdens that are affecting their ability to serve their patients. The prospect of added reductions in Medicare payments would significantly impact our members’ ability to provide care to patients enrolled in Medicare.

On behalf of the Academy, I respectfully ask that you and your colleagues do not extend the misvalued codes policy, and I urge you and your colleagues to ensure that added sequester cuts do not take effect in...
2018 or future years as well. The Academy stands ready to work with you to further the effort to improve access to care for Americans of all ages. Should you have any questions or if the Academy can be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact Shawn Friesen, the Academy’s Director of Legislative, Political & Grassroots Advocacy at 202-712-2601 or sfriesen@aad.org.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Henry W. Lim, MD, FAAD
President, American Academy of Dermatology Association

CC: Suzanne Olbricht, MD, FAAD
    President-Elect, American Academy of Dermatology Association