

September 19, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the Endocrine Society, I am writing urge you to oppose the proposal put forward by Senators Lindsey Graham, Bill Cassidy, Dean Heller, and Ron Johnson that will negatively impact patients' access to adequate and affordable health coverage, preventive services and patient-centered care.

Our members care for people with complex, chronic diseases, such as diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, infertility, rare cancers and thyroid conditions. These diseases affect growing numbers of people, placing stress on the health care system. Our more than 18,000 members care for patients and are dedicated to advancing hormone research and excellence in the clinical practice of endocrinology. We promote policies to help ensure that all individuals with endocrine diseases have access to high quality, specialized care and adequate, affordable health insurance.

Affordable, adequate care is vital to the patients we represent. This legislation fails to provide Americans with what they need to maintain their health. It would limit funding for the Medicaid program, roll back important essential health benefit protections, and potentially allow annual and lifetime caps on coverage, endangering access to critical care for millions of Americans. In addition, it also fails to achieve the other principles our Society has identified for health reform legislation: inclusion of preventive health benefits and maintenance of the Prevention and Public Health Fund; creation of new care models focused on providing coordinated care for people who are treated by multiple health care providers; and protection of women's health, including ensuring that all women have continued access to necessary health care services, contraception, and preventive screenings.

Instead of this legislation, we urge you to continue the bipartisan effort led by Chairman Lamar Alexander and Ranking Member Patty Murray in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee and by Chairman Orrin Hatch and Ranking Member Ron Wyden in the Senate Finance Committee focused on market stabilization and other critical issues.

We urge you to continue bipartisan efforts rather than advancing a proposal that would weaken access to the care Americans need and deserve, and we would like to work with both sides of the aisle to ensure that the needs of endocrine patients are fully considered as policies affecting access to health insurance and the health care system are considered.

Sincerely,



Barbara Byrd Keenan, FASAE, CAE
CEO, Endocrine Society