

December 4, 2019

Dear Representative:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to request that you become a co-sponsor of H.R. 2073, bipartisan legislation that would make permanent the 7.5 percent threshold for the medical expense deduction. We also ask you to support an extension of the 7.5 percent threshold in an end-of-year legislative package. Without action, 4.4 million Americans with high medical costs will face an unexpected tax increase when they file their returns in the coming months.

For more than 75 years, Americans with high health care costs have been able to deduct medical expenses from their taxes. For the millions of Americans who annually take this deduction, it provides important tax relief which helps offset the costs of acute and chronic medical conditions. This includes costs associated with long-term care, assisted living, and nursing homes. These families are often struggling with high deductible, co-pays, and out-of-pocket expenses related to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, equipment, qualified long-term care services costs and long term care insurance premiums. Seventy percent of the taxpayers who claim this deduction have incomes between \$23,100 and \$113,000 per year, and the immediate tax increase they face will make their healthcare less affordable.

Even for those people who are covered by Medicare, beneficiaries spend a large portion of their income on out-of-pocket expenses. The average Medicare beneficiary spends about \$5,680 out-of-pocket on medical care. Furthermore, older Americans often face high costs for long-term services and supports which are generally not covered by Medicare, as well as hospitalizations and prescription drugs. Tax relief in this area can provide needed resources, especially important to middle-income individuals with high medical costs.

We thank you for your consideration, and once again ask you to cosponsor this important legislation and urge its inclusion in any end-of-year package. We must work together to ensure that tax filers with high out-of-pocket health care costs can continue to claim the medical expense deduction at the 7.5 percent of income threshold so that millions of Americans are not hit with a tax increase when they file in the coming months. If you have any questions or need additional information, you can reach out to Brendan Rose with AARP at 202-434-3992 or brose@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

AARP
ACCSES
Alliance for Aging Research
ALS Association
Alzheimer's Association
Alzheimer's Impact Movement
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Health Care Association
American Heart Association
American Seniors Housing Association
Argentum
Association of Jewish Aging Services
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Cancer Support Community
Children's Cancer Cause
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Colon Cancer Coalition
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Family Voices
Fight Colorectal Cancer
FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered
Justice in Aging
Lakeshore Foundation
LeadingAge
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Little Lobbyists
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
Lupus Foundation of America
Medicare Rights Center
Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Center for Assisted Living
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Council on Aging
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Respite Coalition
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Pioneer Network
Susan G. Komen
Tourette Association of America
Triage Cancer
United Spinal Association
Well Spouse Association
ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer