

Contact:
mmarcinko@vascularsociety.org
Grant@GrantHerring.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legislation to Strengthen Community and Office-Based Providers Highlighted by Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee

Washington, DC—The Clinical Labor Coalition (CLC) commends Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee leaders, Reps. Brett Guthrie and Anna Eshoo, for their leadership in convening today's hearing to discuss critical Medicare proposals to improve patient access to care and minimize red tape for doctors. This hearing offered a rare opportunity to highlight fundamental issues in the Medicare program that are negatively impacting both physicians and the patients they serve.

One of the pieces of legislation highlighted at the hearing is H.R. 3674, the Providing Relief and Stability for Medicare Patients Act of 2023. Introduced by Reps. Bilirakis (R-FL), Cardenas (D-CA), Murphy (R-NC) and Davis (D-IL) this legislation addresses the needs of specialty physicians practicing in community-based office settings that have been disproportionately impacted by CMS' proposed changes within the fee schedule. Specifically, the clinical labor update policy, finalized in the CY2022 MPFS Final Rule, recognized the need for increased salary rates for all types of clinical labor (e.g., nurses and technologists), but, due to the budget neutrality constraints in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule, decreased reimbursement rates for those services with high supply and equipment costs when performed in a community-based office setting. H.R. 3674 would provide critical relief for office-based specialists by increasing the non-facility/office-based practice expense relative value units negatively impacted by CMS' clinical labor policy for the next two years.

The CLC is a strong supporter of H.R. 3674, and its member organizations are dedicated to facilitating advancement of the bill. "The impact of these cuts is real for physicians who care for Medicare beneficiaries in a community-based, office setting, and will increasingly result in diminished access to care for Medicare patients seeking a variety of critical services in their neighborhood," said **Dr. Megan Tracci, Chair of the Society for Vascular Surgery's Advocacy Council**. "H.R. 3674 is a critical step to provide desperately needed stability for those most impacted by the clinical labor update policy."

Dr. Bob Tahara, President of the Outpatient Endovascular and Interventional Society added, "Office based specialty care is a critical service outside of the hospital setting. These specialists provide a wide range of services to patients with end-stage renal disease, eye disease, fibroids, as well as limb salvage and venous ulcer needs. Maintaining the office setting is critical for patient access and patients receiving care in a timelier manner."

"For at least a decade, office-based specialty centers have been closing, resulting in a significant loss of access in rural and underserved areas. Enactment of H.R. 3674 is a critical bridge to ensuring that patients with cancer and other life-threatening diseases can continue to receive timely access to care as Congress continues to work on broader reform to the Physician

The Clinical Labor Coalition is a group of national medical organizations, representing a broad range of physicians, health professionals and practice managers who care for Medicare beneficiaries in a community-based, office setting.

Fee Schedule,” said **Dr. Dwight Heron, President of the American College of Radiation Oncology**.

The CLC appreciates the E/C Heath Subcommittee’s efforts to highlight this important legislation and looks forward to working together to ensure it is included in any year-end legislative package.

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Alliance of Wound Care Stakeholders
American Association of Clinical Urologists
American College of Cardiology
American College of Radiation Oncology
American College of Radiology
American College of Surgeons
American Society for Radiation Oncology
American Society of Diagnostic and Interventional Nephrology
American Society of Nephrology
American Urological Association
American Vein & Lymphatic Society
American Venous Forum
Association of Freestanding Radiation Oncology Centers
CardioVascular Coalition
Dialysis Vascular Access Coalition
Free From Fibroids Foundation
Large Urology Group Practice Association
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Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of Interventional Radiology
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