



December 10, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

It is clear Congress will have many challenging and important decisions to make regarding the future of our nation's fiscal deficit and the Medicare physicians' payment system.

As a coalition founded on the premise that eliminating waste, fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs should be priority to Congress when reducing federal spending, we strongly urge Congress to support program integrity reforms that strengthen the Medicare program.

Instead of advancing across-the-board Medicare cuts or increasing out-of-pocket costs for America's seniors, lawmakers should advance targeted solutions to prevent improper and fraudulent payments before they occur.

As members of the *Fight Fraud First!* Coalition, we are dedicated to finding policy solutions that strengthen America's vital health care programs. Recognizing that up to an estimated ten percent of Medicare funding is lost to waste, fraud, and abuse each year, our organizations came together in the collective belief that eradicating these inefficiencies is the most prudent approach to reducing federal spending within the Medicare program.

As a result, we encourage lawmakers to advance proposals that offer targeted approaches to combating fraud and abuse while protecting beneficiaries, quality and efficient providers, and taxpayers. Bipartisan members of the House and Senate have introduced proposals to combat waste, fraud and abuse, and some providers have also put forward proposals.

Rather than turning to Medicare cuts or copayments that unfairly burden seniors, we urge Congress to achieve savings by implementing policy solutions that stop waste, fraud, and abuse before it starts.

We respectfully ask that you prevent increased copayments or cuts to Medicare that would restrict access or reduce benefits, and instead enact program integrity reforms that protect beneficiaries and save valuable taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

AARP
American Autoimmune Related Diseases
Association
Health HIV
Men's Health Network
National Association for Uniformed Services
Vietnam Veterans of America
Women Against Prostate Cancer

National Family Caregivers Association
National Grange
National Minority Quality Forum
Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare
RetireSafe
Veterans Health Council