

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2014

The Honorable Marilyn B. Tavenner
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Tavenner:

We write today regarding the Medicare Hospice Benefit to share our concerns and comments we have been hearing from district stakeholders. While we continue to support CMS's efforts to ensure program integrity and the continuation of efficient and effective programs, we have heard concerns from beneficiaries regarding the March 10, 2014 directive that sets forth a prior authorization process to avoid double payments for the medications of Part D beneficiaries who have elected hospice. This Guidance has created significant confusion among the impacted stakeholder communities and is leaving hospice beneficiaries without the medications they require. A similar letter was sent to your office during the December 2013 comment period for the Guidance expressing concerns, a copy of which we have attached for your reference.

We encourage you to use your existing authority and delay the implementation of the *Part D Payment for Drugs for Beneficiaries Enrolled in Hospice Final Guidance* for 2014 until a uniform and enforceable policy that does not negatively impact beneficiary care is created and the appropriate infrastructure for the provider communities can be thoughtfully and efficiently developed. Further, a temporary delay in implementation would afford CMS the opportunity to work collaboratively with stakeholders and policymakers, to consider policy options and hospice payment reform proposals to determine appropriate reimbursement for drugs for hospice patients that takes into account the patient's individualized hospice care plan and the clinical determinations of their health care professionals.

Many patients and families who depend on hospice face physical and emotional vulnerabilities as they near the end of life. The demographics and patient population being served may have changed since the benefit was implemented, but the need for compassionate, patient-focused end-of-life care remains. We hope that CMS will proceed with greater caution and seriously engage all impacted stakeholder communities as you deal with these issues in the future.

Should you have any questions regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact Laura Ringdahl in Rep. Tom Reed's office at (202) 225-3161 or by email at Laura.Ringdahl@mail.house.gov or Lakecia Foster in Rep. Mike Thompson's office at (202) 225-3311 or by email at Lakecia.Foster@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,


Tom Reed
Member of Congress


Mike Thompson
Member of Congress


Charles W. Boustany, Jr., M.D.
Member of Congress

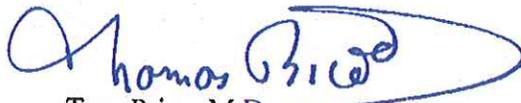

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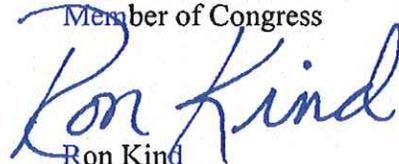

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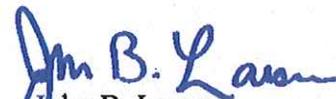

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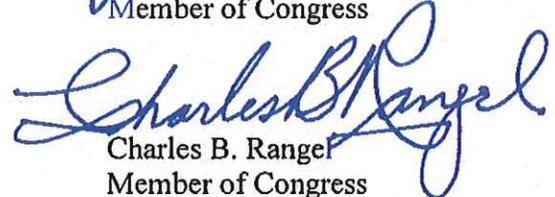

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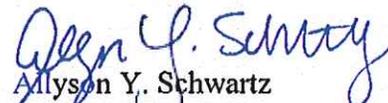

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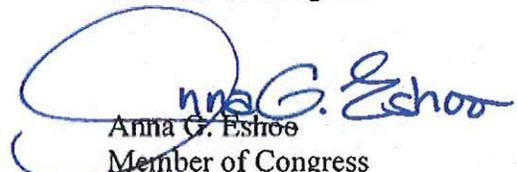

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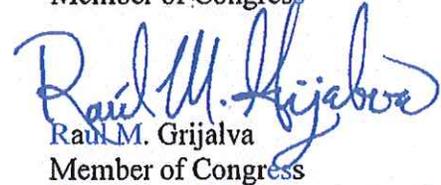
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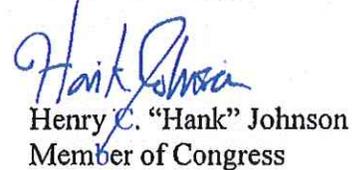
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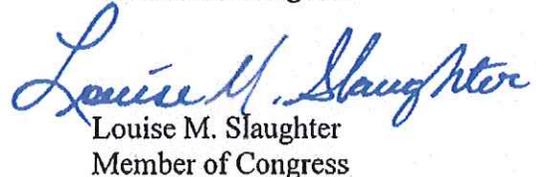
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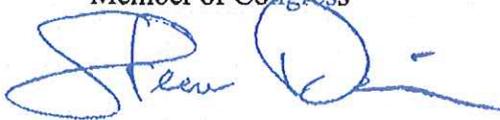
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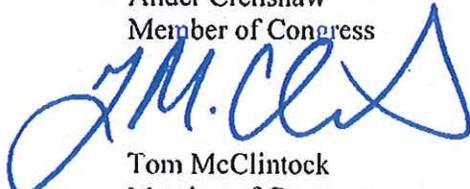

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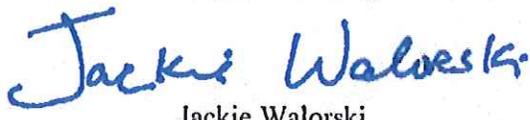

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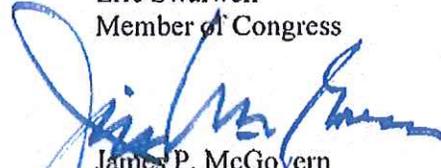

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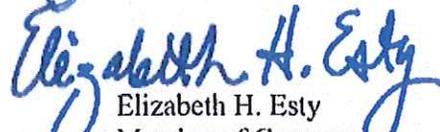

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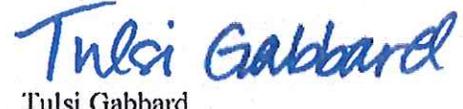

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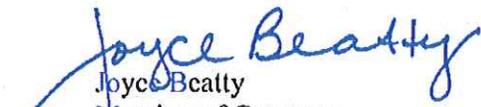

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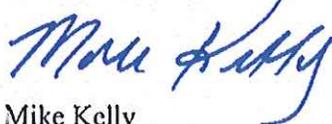
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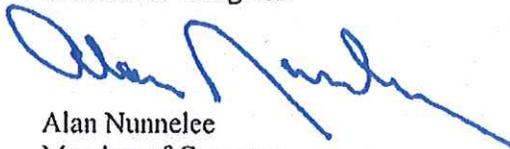

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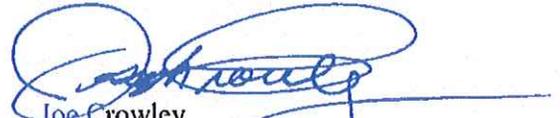

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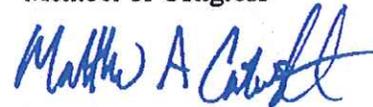

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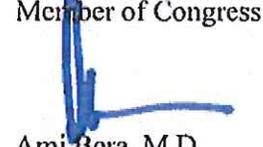

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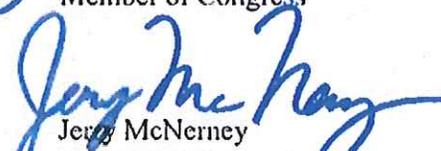

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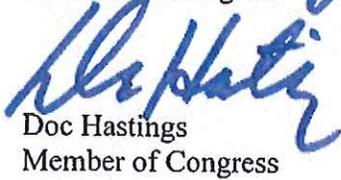

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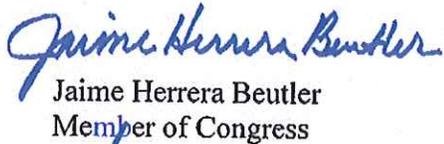

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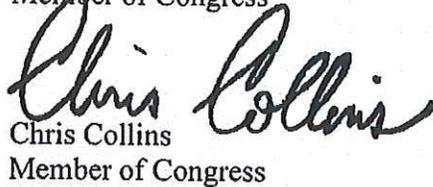

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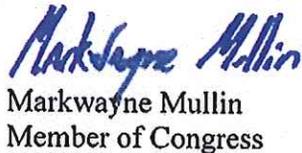

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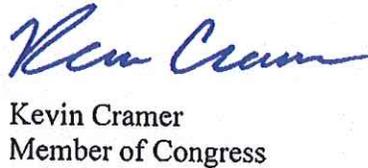

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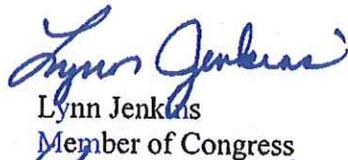

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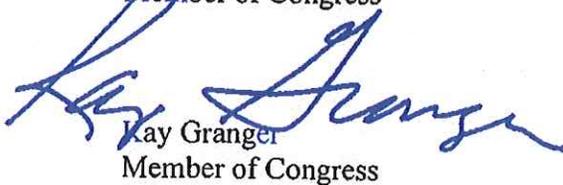

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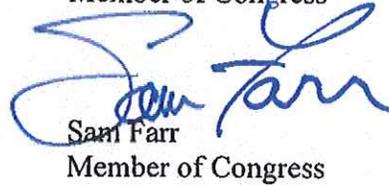

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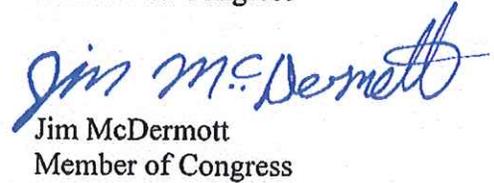

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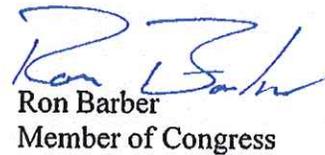

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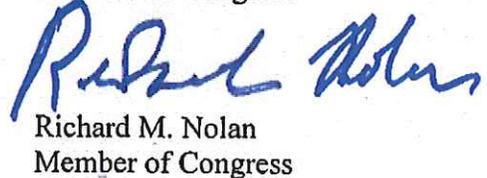

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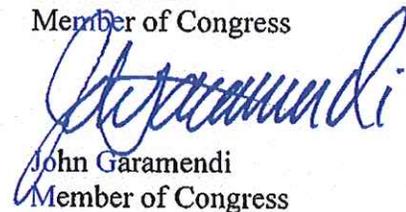

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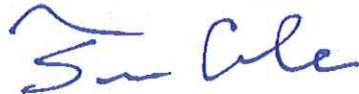

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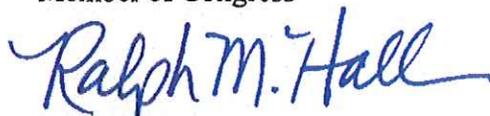

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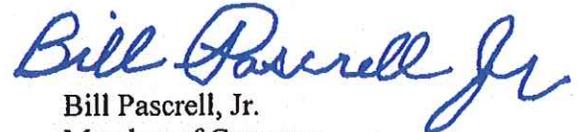

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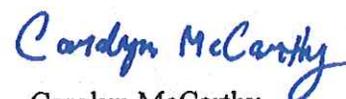

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