Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2014

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you prepare the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 2015, we ask that you rescind all funding for the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) and include report language prohibiting the Department of Health and Human Services from using appropriated funds to engage in any activities related to the IPAB process.

The IPAB has sweeping powers to reduce the growth of Medicare spending. Its proposals will be considered using "fast track" procedures and—absent a three-fifths vote of the Senate—Congress can only modify the type of cuts proposed, not the amount. Should Congress fail to act on the board's recommendations, they automatically go into effect. To make matters worse, the IPAB is exempt from administrative or judicial review.

If the president does not nominate individuals to serve on the IPAB—or if the IPAB fails to recommend cuts to Medicare—the law gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services the power to make changes unilaterally. We all should be able to agree that the power to affect seniors' health care should not be concentrated in one person.

We applaud the Appropriations Committee for previous rescissions, but we must go further to prevent this unelected, unaccountable bureaucracy from ever limiting seniors' access to needed medical care. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Paul P Roe

TN-04

Jackie Walorski

Renee Ellmers

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