APTA Joins More Than 70 Organizations to Urge Congress to Extend Vital Health Care Programs, Policies

ALEXANDRIA, VA, February 1, 2018 — In a letter to House and Senate leaders this week, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) joined more than 70 national provider organizations to urge Congress to reauthorize and fund programs and policies vital to health care and the nation’s health care safety net.

The groups called for swift action on 7 programs and policies lawmakers left out of a January 19 continuing resolution that both funds the government through February 8 and extends the Children’s Health Insurance Program by 6 years. Those programs and policies are:

- Community Health Center Fund
- Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital payment funding
- Medicare Therapy Cap Extension
- Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program
- Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program
- National Health Service Corps
- Physician Fee Schedule GPCI Parity Policy

Lapsed funding or authorization for each, “coupled by the continuous enactment of short-term [government funding] patches, has placed in jeopardy health care services for seniors on Medicare and patients in underserved communities, resources for health care providers in rural communities, and programs aimed at training primary care physicians,” the groups wrote. The letter was sent to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY), House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI), and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA).

“These programs and policies are core to this country’s health care and essential to ensuring that patients have access to the care they need,” said APTA CEO Justin Moore, PT, DPT. “We are better together, and APTA did not hesitate to sign on to this letter in hopes that Congress will hear us and take swift and decisive action not just to provide a permanent fix to the therapy cap, but to also address these other critical issues impacting our health care system.”

Organizations that joined APTA in signing the letter include the American Academy of Family Physicians, America’s Essential Hospitals, and the National Association of Community Health Centers, to name just a few.

The groups note that all the programs and policies “enjoy strong bipartisan support and many have been approved for reauthorization and funding by the appropriate committees of jurisdiction, during the current Congress.”
“The continued lack of predictable funding for these programs and policies stands to negatively impact the lives of millions of people and communities all across the nation,” the organizations said in their letter.

The American Physical Therapy Association represents more than 100,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy nationwide. Visit MoveForwardPT.com to learn more about the types of conditions physical therapists treat, and find a physical therapist in your area.

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