



June 16, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Ryan:

On behalf of America's Essential Hospitals and our more than 250 member hospitals across the country, I am writing to oppose a proposed amendment to offset the cost of H.R. 1190, the Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act of 2015. The amendment, proposed by Rep. Joe Pitts, would rescind funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

America's Essential Hospitals supports the repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), as proposed the legislation. We believe that repeal of IPAB would help ensure that Congress has the flexibility to ensure the sustainability of Medicare payment rates and ensure that the most vulnerable seniors who rely on Medicare will be able to maintain access to health care.

Despite our support for the repeal of IPAB, we are disturbed by the proposed amendment to offset potential costs of the repeal with decreased funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund. This fund invests in vital public health initiatives that help to improve health outcomes and enhance quality of care for patients. Further, many of the initiatives supported by the Fund help to decrease hospital and health care costs. In fiscal year 2015 alone, the Fund provides the resources for 19 programs and activities that focus on prevention and management of health care costs, including those seeking to:

- help older adults and adults with disabilities from underserved populations cope with chronic conditions
- enhance the ability of jurisdictions to detect and respond to infectious diseases
- implement diabetes prevention and control strategies
- improve immunization infrastructure to increase vaccine coverage for children and adults

While we greatly appreciate your support on the repeal of IPAB, we strongly oppose reductions to the Prevention and Public Health Fund to offset associated costs. The proposed amendment will hinder our ability to support the legislation and we hope you consider alternative offsets that do not jeopardize the health and well-being of the nation's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

/s/

Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH
President and CEO

cc: Rep. Joe Pitts, Chair, Subcommittee on Health, Committee on Energy and Commerce