

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 25, 2017

The Honorable Eric Hargan, Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Honorable Seema Verma, Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Acting Secretary Hargan and Administrator Verma:

We write today regarding the calendar year (CY) 2019 Home Health Groupings Model (HHGM) that is included in the CY2018 Home Health Prospective Payment System proposed rule published in the Federal Register on July 28, 2017. Specifically, we ask that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) refrain from finalizing the proposed HHGM until affected stakeholders can fully analyze and understand the impact of the proposed changes.

Home health is a critical and cost-effective service for our constituents and the millions of seniors and people with disabilities who rely on it for treatment and high-quality care in the environment they prefer – their home.

We have heard from a number of stakeholders who are concerned that the proposed rule lacks key methodology and data points. Complete information is essential for home health agencies to be able to accurately estimate the impact of the proposed HHGM on patient access and provider resources. It is essential that those most affected by the proposed rule have the opportunity, as well as the necessary information, to evaluate any consequences prior to the CMS finalizing the proposed reforms.

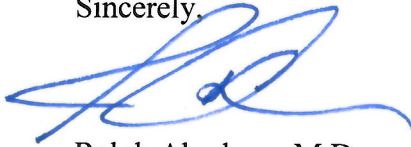
According to CMS estimates, the HHGM model and other changes included in the proposed rule are not budget neutral and could reduce Medicare reimbursements for home health services by as much as \$950 million in 2019 alone. While we support efforts to increase efficiencies in Medicare, we believe this must be done in a prudent manner that does not compromise access to care for the increasing number of seniors and veterans who depend on these services to remain healthy and at home in their communities.

We agree and share CMS' stated goal of more closely aligning home health reimbursements with the patients' clinical needs. To that end, we ask that CMS not include the HHGM proposal in its final CY 2018 Home Health Prospective Payment System rulemaking and instead work with

relevant stakeholders, including home health agencies, providers and patient groups, in a more inclusive process as you develop and implement payment reforms.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to working with you on these important matters.

Sincerely,



Ralph Abraham, M.D.
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell
Member of Congress



Steve Scalise
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenaur
Member of Congress



Garret Graves
Member of Congress



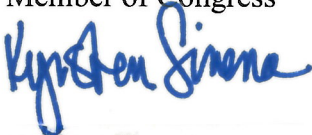
Leonard Lance
Member of Congress



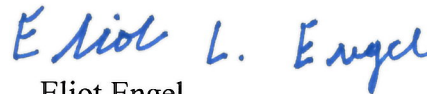
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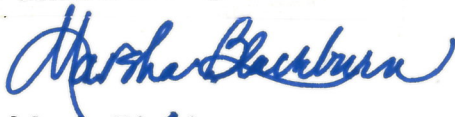
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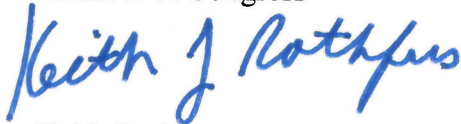

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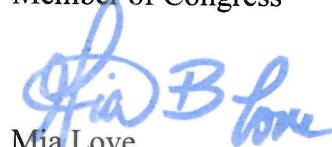

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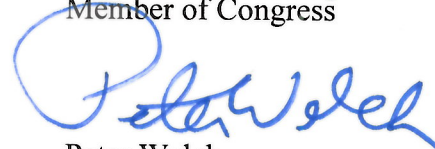

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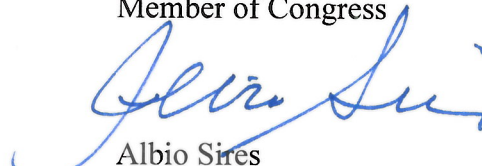

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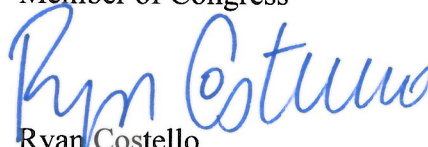

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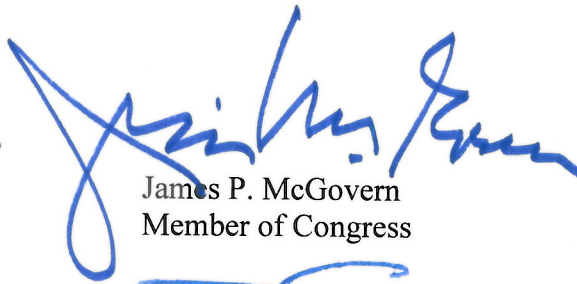

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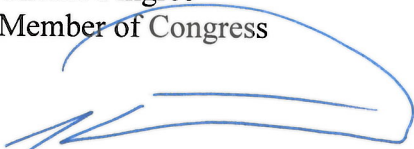
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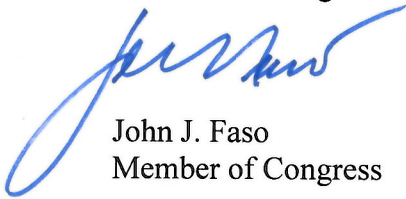
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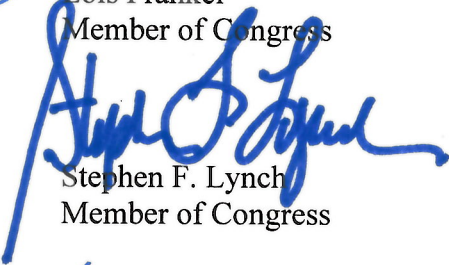
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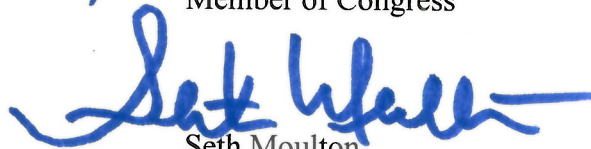
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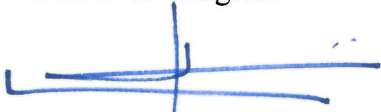
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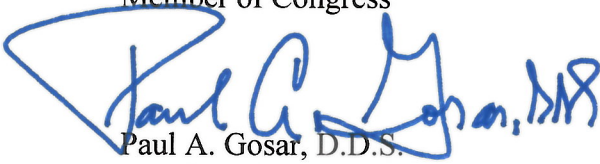
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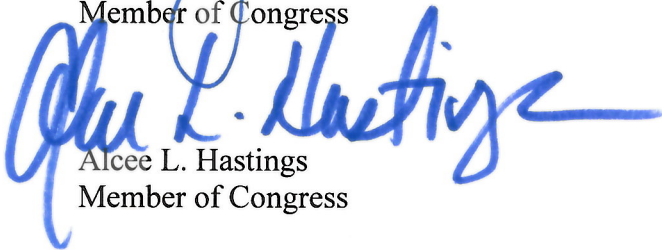
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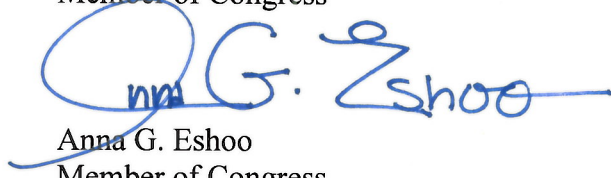
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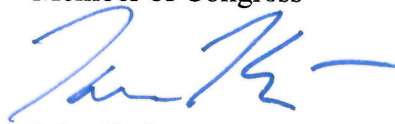
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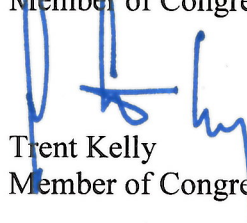
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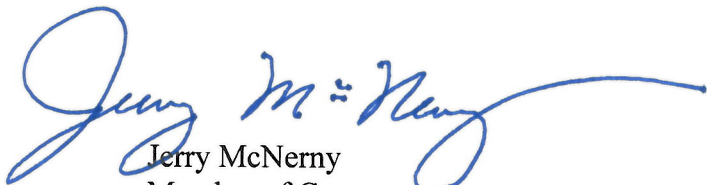
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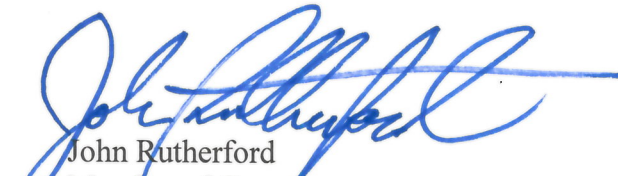



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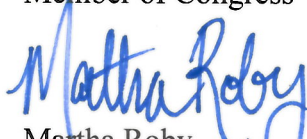

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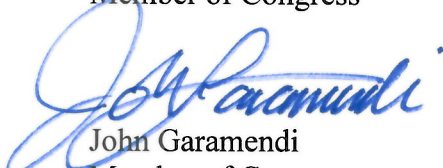

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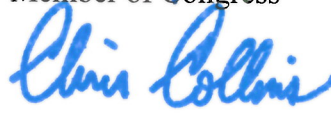

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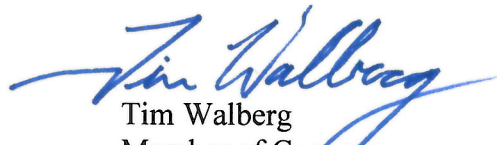

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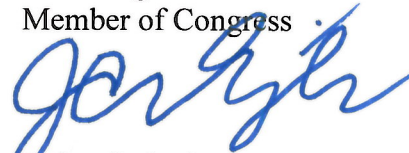

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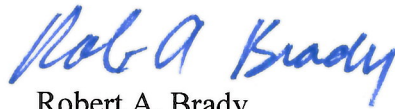

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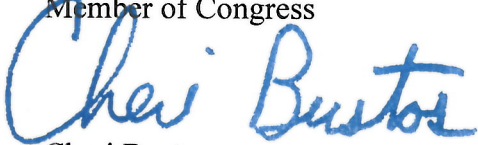
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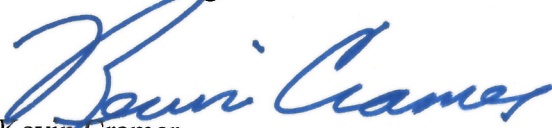
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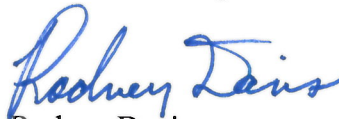
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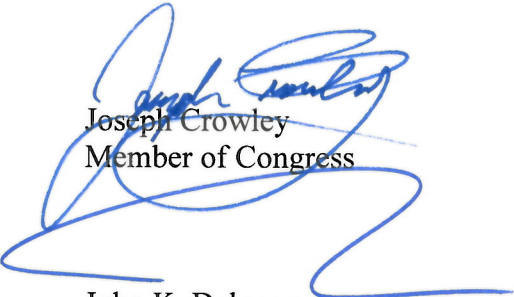
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Barbara Lee

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Carolyn B. Maloney

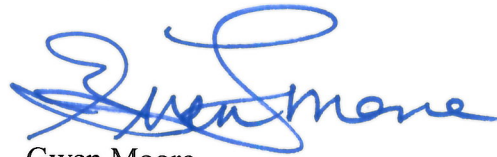
Carolyn B. Maloney
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A. Donald McEachin

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



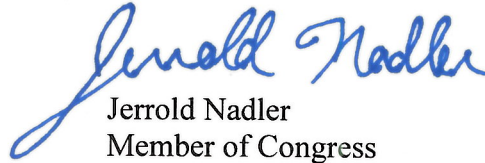
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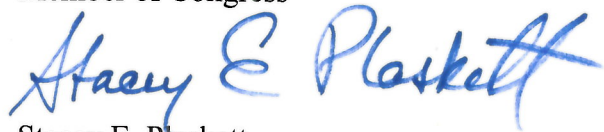
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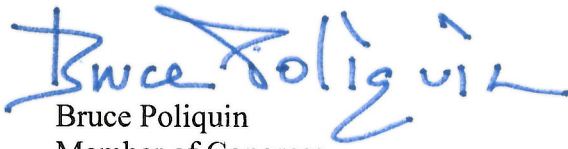
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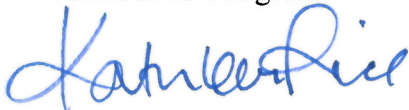
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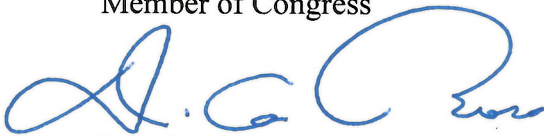
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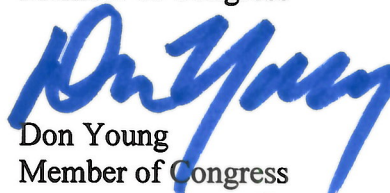

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