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The NRLN advocates the rights of more than 2 million American retirees from...

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August 19, 2019

The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Chairman
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1501

Dear Chairman Grassley:

On behalf of the more than 2 million retirees and future retirees represented by the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN), I am requesting that you call for a vote in the Committee on Finance on **S. 433, House Health Payment Innovation Act of 2019**. Passage of this bill would preserve access to existing home health services under Medicare while also providing for innovative approaches to using these services vital to 3.5 million seniors.

The bill would make two key adjustments in home health payment reform provisions that were passed last year. First, it would prevent unwarranted payment rate cuts by basing any behavioral adjustment on actual evidence. Second, it would limit the risk of disruption in care by providing a phase in for any necessary rate increases or decreases. This phase in is critical for home health care providers as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has proposed cutting Medicare payment rates in 2020 by more than \$1 billion in the first year alone based exclusively on unsubstantiated assumptions about provider behavior, rather than observable evidence or real-world data.

Medicare's home health benefit has provided critical care for patients with certain disabilities who have difficulty accessing outpatient care facilities and for others returning home after a hospital stay. These beneficiaries are often the sickest and most vulnerable patients within the Medicare program. They are more likely to live in communities that are underserved, impoverished, and have fewer health care provider options.

If you would like to know more about why the NRLN supports **S. 433**, please ask a member of your staff to contact me or Alyson Parker, the NRLN's Executive Director in Washington, DC at 813-545-6792 or executivedirector@nrln.org.

The NRLN's full Legislative Agenda and detailed whitepapers can be found at www.nrln.org. Your consideration on these issues would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Bill Kadereit, President,
National Retiree Legislative Network
Phone: 972-722-5928 Email: president@nrln.org