



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

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Congress' Failure to Pass No-Cost, Broadly Supported, Unopposed Bill Leaves Seniors with More Delays and Denials of Necessary Health Care from Unaccountable Medicare Advantage Plans

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In the last gasp of the 118th Congress, federal policymakers have a choice – to protect Medicare seniors or to allow insurance companies to delay and deny care for some of our nation's most vulnerable patients.

We are **outraged** to report that Congress has chosen the latter option by **failing to include *The Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act (Seniors' Act) – S. 4532 /H.R. 8702* in the pending end of year package**. The Seniors' Act is bipartisan legislation that would protect Medicare Advantage (MA) program enrollees from unnecessary delays and denials of medically necessary care by streamlining and standardizing prior authorization (PA) in MA.

The Regulatory Relief Coalition (RRC) and its over 500 allies call on Congress to **immediately enact this bill** and these critically important issues now or when it reconvenes in 2025.

The legislation meets every requirement to become law this year in an end-of-year package. The Seniors' Act:

- Received a **ZERO SCORE from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO)**.
- Earned a **majority of co-sponsors** in the House (231) and Senate (60).
- Moved through **two House committees** and **unanimously passed the House of Representatives**.
- Was **endorsed by 500+** patient groups, provider groups, *insurers*, and other health care stakeholders.
- Was bolstered by **dozens of studies, reports, and surveys evidencing the very serious harm to patient care caused by MA insurer delays and denials**.

Congress had the opportunity to reach a deal that put patients over paperwork and would have protected more than 30 million Medicare enrollees. Despite being thoroughly vetted over the past seven years and receiving a zero-cost score from CBO, policymakers unnecessarily began revisiting bill language, seeking to water down this consensus-driven, bipartisan bill to merely codify rules recently finalized by the agency — stripping away essential transparency and oversight protections that are the hallmark of this widely supported legislation.

Our nation's seniors have been counting on Congress to act to restore their timely access to medically necessary health care. Unfortunately, this Congress is failing them by putting aside smart policy in favor of political bickering.

This colossal failure to respond to the public outcry for better oversight and transparency of the MA program is completely unacceptable. The RRC commits to working with the bill champions and our broad and strong coalition to help Congress see the light on the need to act and rein in unnecessary prior authorization delays and denials. We won't stop fighting for what we — as a driven group of patient-focused stakeholders and providers who care for them — know is right for America's seniors.

Congress, after more than seven years of negotiation and debate, it's well past time for you to do your part and act now.

More information about the RRC and the legislation is available at www.regrelief.org.

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