

November 14, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi,
Speaker of the House
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy,
House Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell,
Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Chuck Schumer,
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing a diverse coalition of taxpayer, consumer, and free-market advocates, we write asking you to avoid including surprise billing legislation in a larger year-end legislative package. Though we may disagree on the best methods to resolve payment disputes over surprise bills, we are unified in believing that this serious issue should be examined and debated on its own merits, not tucked into a large or unrelated bill as some expedient “pay-for” to mask runaway government spending.

The surprise billing issue has led to a fierce debate inside and outside Washington. While all stakeholders agree on the need to protect patients from balance billing, there is considerable disagreement over how to resolve inevitable payment disputes between providers and insurers. The topic has captured a significant amount of time and attention of the congressional committees with jurisdiction over health issues, especially the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Yet, much more work remains to be done to arrive at a comprehensive and viable solution.

This makes it all the more critical that whatever proposals come before the House and Senate receive a standalone vote and an opportunity for focused floor debate. Jamming a surprise billing proposal into unrelated legislation, such as an appropriations bill that doubles down on the growth of federal spending or a drug pricing bill, is inconsistent with the impact this issue has on the health care system at large.

We expect surprise billing will continue to be a subject of considerable discussion among members of Congress, doctors, insurers, patients, and taxpayers. These and other stakeholders deserve to have their voices heard carefully and thoughtfully by the legislative branch. Thus, at a minimum, we urge you to avoid a rushed, back-door process to passing a proposal on this issue.

Sincerely,



National Taxpayers Union



60 Plus Association



American Commitment



American Consumer Institute



Americans for Prosperity



Center for a Free Economy



Center for Freedom and Prosperity



Center for Individual Freedom



Club for Growth



Consumer Action for a Strong Economy



Council for Citizens Against Government Waste



FreedomWorks



Institute for Liberty



Less Government



Taxpayers Protection Alliance