

June 6, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman, Ways and Means Committee
United States House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman, Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member, Ways and Means Committee
United States House of Representatives
1139E Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Chairmen Brady and Walden, and Representatives Neal and Pallone:

We, the undersigned organizations representing Medicare Advantage Dual-eligible Special Needs Plans, health care providers, and advocates, are writing to urge Congress to permanently authorize the Medicare Advantage Dual-Eligible Special Needs Plan (D-SNP) program this year. D-SNPs play an important role in delivering and coordinating Medicare and Medicaid benefits for dual-eligible beneficiaries and tailor care management, provider interventions, and partnerships with community-based organizations to the unique needs of their dual-eligible enrollees. We believe that this program, in existence for over a decade, has demonstrated its vital role in serving the dual-eligible population. Congress should finally give this program the long-term stability that states, plans, and beneficiaries need.

As you know, D-SNPs have been reauthorized several times with bipartisan support, but through a series of short-term extensions. As it stands, the program's authorization expires at the end of 2018. Full integration of Medicare and Medicaid benefits through the D-SNPs' contracts with states or between D-SNPs and managed long-term care services and supports (MLTSS) plans requires intensive work and collaboration spanned across multiple years. Short-term reauthorizations impede states and plans from entering longer-term partnerships and making investments in integration by creating uncertainty and questions surrounding Congress' support of the program. To provide stability for states, plans, and the nearly 2 million Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in D-SNPs, we believe that Congress should, in the best case, permanently authorize D-SNPs or, at a minimum provide a long-term reauthorization of no less than seven years.

Medicare/Medicaid Dual Eligibles are among the most-costly and hardest-to-serve populations receiving benefits in either program and we believe that the D-SNP program offers great opportunity and potential to improve care and benefits coordination and quality of care. It is widely believed that the reauthorization of the D-SNP program will accompany other Medicare extenders legislation and we strongly urge this bipartisan program to accompany this or other priority legislation moving through the House as soon as possible. The Senate Finance Committee has already signaled its unanimous and bipartisan support for permanent reauthorization and we urge the House to do the same. That is why we are urging you, as bipartisan leaders in the House of Representatives, to move legislation permanently authorizing D-SNPs this year.

In advance, thank you for your consideration of this request.

Alliance of Community Health Plans
America's Health Insurance Plans
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
Better Medicare Alliance
National Coalition on Health Care
The SNP Alliance