



March 2, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Neal, Chairman Walden, and Ranking Member Pallone:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), I am writing to express our concern about reports that legislation to repeal and replace the ACA and radically change how Medicaid is financed may be marked up as early as next week without hearings, input from us and other health advocacy groups or a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) score on its impact. I urge that any proposals to modify or improve on current law be released in detail beforehand—including legislative language and CBO scoring and analysis—well before any committee mark or floor vote, and also with enough time to allow for hearings on the proposals. Following regular order would provide a valuable opportunity for analysis, review and input by organizations and other stakeholders, by members of Congress, and by independent and nonpartisan analysts.

Only yesterday, the College [wrote](#) that Congress must ensure that any possible changes to current law, including improvements to the ACA, Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program should *first, do no harm* and to also share our observations about how some of the policies reportedly being considered by the congressional leadership and authorizing committees may fall short in actually resulting in better coverage and access to care for essential medical services.

The American College of Physicians is the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician group in the United States. ACP members include 148,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness.

Making substantial changes to our healthcare system by changing current law would impact tens of millions of our patients. Congress therefore must avoid any unintended adverse consequences when

making legislative and regulatory changes. Achieving this goal requires a delicate balance and necessitates a robust review and stakeholder input that can only be afforded by an open and transparent legislative process.

ACP's intention is to evaluate any proposals being considered by your committees based on whether they preserve and improve on the essential coverage, benefits and consumer protections we have previously [described](#), and on access to care for both currently insured and uninsured individuals, children and families. Without regular order, including hearings, the time to review legislative text, and a CBO score, it is impossible to evaluate the impact on coverage, costs, and federal spending and provide needed input before votes are taken. Therefore, we urge you to not mark up any legislation until the opportunity for analysis and review has taken place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nitin Damle". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Nitin S. Damle, MD, MS, MACP
President

Cc: Members of House Energy and Commerce Committee, House Ways and Means Committee