



Support Legislation to Stabilize Seniors' Access to Care and Strengthen the Physician Workforce

The American College of Physicians (ACP) urges Congress to strengthen the physician workforce and stabilize Medicare physician payment by supporting two bipartisan priorities that will help ensure patients continue to have access to high-quality, physician-led care.

Stabilize Care for Seniors by Improving Medicare Payment for Physicians

ACTION: Co-sponsor H.R. 9693, the *Patients First Act of 2026*

The Patients First Act of 2026 would strengthen Medicare beneficiaries' access to care and help independent physician practices remain financially viable by creating a more stable and sustainable Medicare physician payment system. The legislation would establish a new primary care hybrid payment demonstration project, without patient cost sharing, which will aid independent physician-owned practices. It also provides predictable annual Medicare payment updates that better reflect the cost of providing care and modernizes Medicare's physician payment system by transitioning from the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) to a new quality reporting program.

For decades, Medicare physician payment has failed to keep pace with the rising cost of providing care, placing increasing financial pressure on practices. The Patients First Act would strengthen physician practices by improving payment stability, supporting independent practices, and encouraging participation in value-based care. Read the [ACP letter of support](#).

Protect Physician Access to Visa Programs

ACTION: Co-sponsor H.R. 7961, the *H-1Bs for Physicians & the Healthcare Workforce Act*

H.R. 7961 would exempt physicians and other health care professionals from the \$100,000 H-1B visa fee that took effect in September 2025. The legislation would also prevent future H-1B visa fees for health care workers from exceeding existing statutory limits. International medical graduates (IMGs) comprise approximately one-quarter of the U.S. physician workforce and play a critical role in providing care, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Imposing a \$100,000 H-1B visa fee threatens physician recruitment, graduate medical education, and access to care for patients. Supporting H.R. 7961 would help address physician workforce shortages and ensure communities continue to have access to the care they need. Read the [ACP letter of support](#).