

Dear colleagues:

In my capacity as Legislative Committee Chair of the Memphis Medical Society, I have been alerting patients and colleagues of an important healthcare issue that will affect access to healthcare services effective January 1st, 2024. Current budgetary planning in Washington DC has led to a 3.4% to 9% cut in all of the physician fee schedules under Medicare Part B to happen on 01/01/2024. These cuts will impact all physician services – inpatient, outpatient, laboratory, radiology, emergency room, and operating room. Because many commercial contracts tie payment rates directly to the Medicare fee schedule, the effects will be widespread within the healthcare world, extending not only to our nation’s seniors, but also to young people and even children. So now is the time for **all of us to contact Tennessee Representative David Kustoff and Tennessee Senator Marsha Blackburn** about correcting these cuts.

Federal **House Resolution 2474 – the Strengthen Medicare for Patients and Physicians Act** – is bipartisan legislation that would change these cuts into a yearly inflationary increase tied to what’s called the Medicare Economic Index. HR 2474 – sponsored by Rep. Larry Buchshon, a surgeon from Indiana’s 8th District and Representative Ami Bera – a family practitioner from California’s 7th congressional district - is strongly supported by the American Medical Association.

As of September 1st, 2023, this bill had 33 cosponsors in the federal House, that number having fortunately climbed to 56 cosponsors as of 11/10/2203. Currently, 3 of the 9 federal Tennessee representatives are cosponsors, so it would be most helpful if Tennessee Representative David Kustoff, TN 8th District, would become a cosponsor, and also if Senator Marsha Blackburn would write a corresponding bill for the Senate.

Although it is possible to Email the corresponding staff members for Representative Kustoff and Senator Blackburn, I personally feel that the most impactful action for all of us to take would be to **place two phone calls**, to underscore the importance of their cosponsorship of this legislation. If you end up leaving a message, please ask the staff member to call you back, because of the imminent nature of these deep healthcare cuts, and follow-up with them, if you haven’t heard back from them in 2-3 days.

Tennessee residents:

1. Representative Kustoff’s Office: representing Germantown, Collierville, Lakeland, Bartlett, and all of Tennessee out to Jackson, TN: 1-202-225-4714 or 1-901-682-4422.
D.Kustoff@mail.house.gov.

Representative Kustoff’s Special Assistant is Billy Masters, 1-901-509-7152.
Billy.masters@mail.house.gov.

2. Senator Marsha Blackburn's office: 1-202-224-3344 or 1-901-527-9199. Senator

Blackburn's Healthcare Legislative Aide is Jack Boyd: 1-202-224-3344 or Jack_Boyd@Blackburn.senate.gov. **Mississippi residents:** MS Federal Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith 1-202-224-5054 or 1-662-236-1018 and Senator Roger Wicker: 1-202-224-6253 or 1-662-844-5010, and Representative Trent Kelley's staff Abbey Herfurth: 1-202-225-4306: ABBEY.HERFURTH@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV

Arkansas residents:

Arkansas Senator John Boozman 1-202-224-4843 and Senator Tom Cotton 1-202-224-2353 and Representative Rick Crawford 1-202-225-4076 and 1-870-424-2075: R.crawford@mail.house.gov.

Mississippi residents:

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith: 1-202-224-5054 or 1-662-236-1018.
Senator Roger Wicker: 1-202-224-6253 or 1-662-844-5010.
Representative Trent Kelly: Legislative Aide Abbey Herfurth: 1-202-225-4306.
ABBEY.HERFURTH@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV.

Feel free to contact me for further background on this issue, or for any comments, questions, or feedback on this issue. Many thanks for your help in keeping our healthcare system healthy!

Sincerely, George Woodbury Jr. M.D.
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