



Jun 9, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy & Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy Mc-Morris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy & Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo  
Chairwoman  
Health Subcommittee, House Energy &  
Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Ranking Member  
Health Subcommittee, House Energy and  
Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris-Rodgers, Chairwoman Eshoo, and Ranking Member Guthrie:

We write to ask for your support in advancing innovative bi-partisan healthcare legislation that will expand access and lead to better care for patients, hold down Medicare costs, and provide much needed relief to one of our most overly stressed group of medical practitioners -- the **Medicare Access to Radiology Care Act (MARCA), H.R. 3657**, introduced by Representatives Mike Doyle and John Curtis.

The rising demand and clinical need for timely medical imaging services and the increased complexity of radiologic studies have created high demand for radiology services. This was especially apparent in our time of national crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic and now with workforce shortages of radiologists and technologists.

Radiologist assistants (RAs), are advanced-level radiographers who perform imaging and image guided procedures under the direct supervision of a radiologist, as allowed in state law.

While RAs are now recognized under Medicare to perform imaging services under direct supervision of a radiologist, the radiology practices who employ RAs are unable to bill Medicare for all services RAs are educated and competent to furnish. This legislation would allow the radiology practice to submit claims to Medicare for procedures RAs perform in hospitals, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory surgical centers. This bill *does not* allow RAs to interpret images, prescribe medications, work independently or bill Medicare for the services they provide.

The increasing workforce shortages of medical imaging professionals is leading to increased wait times for patients scheduling procedures that require the services of a radiologist or authorized non-physician practitioner. MARCA would increase the number of highly trained medical imaging professionals who are specifically educated to perform some of the procedures that only a radiologist or authorized non-physician practitioner can currently provide. In addition to

helping alleviate the long wait times for patients, if radiologists were allowed to bill for procedures performed by the RA, it would encourage individuals to come into the medical imaging profession by providing career advancement opportunities beyond a general radiographer.

Currently, shortages in the availability of radiologists requires radiologists who are in practice to spend more time performing minor procedures, giving them less time to focus on interpreting the imaging procedures and performing the more complex procedures, thus exacerbating the worker shortage problem and burn out issues for radiologists. The only solutions, in states that allow them, is to quickly train non-physician practitioners such as nurse practitioners and physician's assistants to perform these procedures. Often, these assistants receive very little education and training in radiation safety and quality medical imaging.

RA's, however, are medical imaging professionals who have a minimum of 5 years' experience performing medical imaging and who are specifically educated to provide some of the services that radiologists provide. The RA, under direct supervision of a radiologist, can perform minor procedures, allowing the radiologist to focus on interpreting images and performing more complex procedures.

As a direct result of Medicare's current policy, RAs are losing jobs and are unable to practice to the full extent of their abilities, and Medicare patients are not receiving the full benefit of care provided by qualified and experienced radiology professionals. RAs can help the radiology practice workflow thus improving efficiency and effective management of patient care, medical imaging quality, imaging resources and technical personnel, and reduce radiologist burnout.

For the benefit of American patients, medical practitioners, and taxpayers, we urge you to support action on this much needed piece of legislation to improve America's healthcare system. We thank you for your time and consideration, as well as your leadership and commitment to supporting innovative solutions for your constituents. Should you or your staff wish to discuss further, we are available to do so at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerard Scimeca". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gerard Scimeca  
Chairman, Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

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Consumer Action for a Strong Economy  
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