



December 11, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of Families USA, a leading nonpartisan, national voice for health care consumers, I write to offer our strong support for the bipartisan, bicameral *Lower Health Care Costs Act*, which includes critical protections for America's families against the scourge of surprise medical bills. We are pleased to see bipartisan action being taken to ensure that families will not have to go bankrupt if they have to go to the hospital or visit a doctor due to a surprise bill. We are grateful to Sens. Alexander and Murray, with Reps. Pallone and Walden, Sens. Cassidy and Hassan, and Reps. Ruiz and Bucshon for their work moving this forward.

The *Lower Health Care Costs Act* is an incredibly important bill to our nation's families. Its surprise billing provisions are wildly popular across the political spectrum. **With more than 10,000 families getting hit with surprise medical bills every day, it is vital that protections from surprise bills are enacted immediately. Further delay on an issue that has been debated by Congress for an entire year is unacceptable.** We urge you in the strongest possible terms to pass the legislation by the end of 2019.

**The surprise billing protections in the legislation represent the most significant consumer protections since the passage of the Affordable Care Act.** These protections are now in your hands. You must decide whether to act now to protect families from financial ruin or do nothing and further line the pockets of Wall Street private equity firms. The surprise billing provisions include strong consumer protections such as air ambulance protections, improved transparency and a fair, market-based reimbursement methodology. Other consumer-friendly components of the bill include funding for state databases to analyze health care quality and costs, and provisions to curb anti-competitive behavior by providers and health plans. These are important because they will help reduce health care costs and improve health care quality for all.

Despite profound disagreements on other issues, *the Lower Health Care Costs Act* even has the support of the administration. Most importantly, it is what consumers want. **Recent [polling](#) sponsored by Families USA indicates that nearly 9 in 10 voters support legislation to protect patients from surprise out-of-network medical bills.<sup>1</sup> We urge Congress to pass the bipartisan, bicameral surprise billing compromise bill before the end of the year. Postponing consideration of the legislation risks its failure altogether and would represent a profound failure by Congress to protect America's families.**

Sincerely,



Shawn Gremminger, MPP  
Senior Director, Federal Relations

cc: Rep. Bobby Scott, Chair, House Education and Labor Committee  
Rep. Frank Pallone, Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
Rep. Richard Neal, Chair, House Ways and Means Committee  
Sen. Lamar Alexander, Chair, Senate HELP Committee  
Rep. Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member, House Education and Labor Committee  
Rep. Greg Walden, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
Rep. Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee  
Sen. Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Senate HELP Committee  
Sen. Bill Cassidy  
Sen. Maggie Hassan  
Rep. Raul Ruiz  
Rep. Larry Bucshon

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<sup>i</sup> <https://familiesusa.org/resources/families-usa-surprise-medical-bills-national-survey/>