

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 18, 2022

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

We write to express bipartisan support for the Medicare Advantage program and the high-quality, affordable care it provides to over 27 million older adults and people with disabilities. We appreciate the Administration's ongoing commitment to preserve and strengthen the program, as demonstrated in the proposed CMS 2023 Medicare Advantage and Part D Advance Notice. As you consider annual updates for plan year 2023, we ask you to ensure that payment or policy changes allow Medicare Advantage plans to continue to provide the patient-centered care that 43 percent of Medicare-eligible Americans rely on every day.

The Medicare Advantage program enables plans to take a holistic approach to care, including by addressing social determinants of health to meet seniors' needs and improving health equity. Enrollees in the program benefit from out-of-pocket cost limits and plan options that can include access to telehealth services, in-home care, nutrition services, and transportation benefits to meet seniors' individual needs. In fact, over 95 percent of Medicare Advantage beneficiaries have access to meal services, telehealth, transportation, dental, fitness, vision, and hearing benefits.¹ Access to these benefits and care provided under the Medicare Advantage program have helped enrollees stay healthy and safe throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Medicare Advantage also consistently delivers high-quality care and value that provides beneficiaries with more coordinated access to enhanced benefits, innovative clinical care models, and greater financial protections. Currently, 90 percent of enrollees are in Medicare Advantage plans rated 4 or more Stars.² Additionally, the program supports an increasingly diverse population with varied health and socioeconomic backgrounds. For 2022, 65 percent of MA enrollees are in zero-premium plans and the average monthly Medicare Advantage premiums will reach historically low premiums, even while the availability of supplemental benefits continue to increase.^{34iii.iv}

For plan year 2023, we urge the Administration maintain stability within Medicare Advantage, including advancing flexible in-plan benefit offerings and promoting care coordination. We are committed to ensuring that our constituents who rely on Medicare Advantage enjoy the same access to affordable benefits in order to get the care they need, particularly as they navigate the persistent

¹ Kaiser Family Foundation. (November 2021). Medicare Advantage 2022 Spotlight: First Look.

<https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/medicare-advantage-2022-spotlight-first-look/>

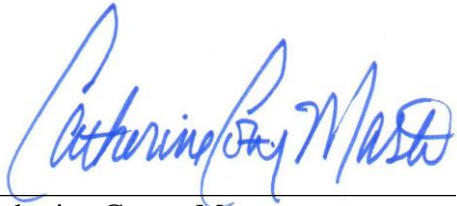
² CMS. (October 2021). *2022 Medicare Advantage and Part D Star Ratings to Help Medicare Beneficiaries Compare Plans*. <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-releases-2022-medicare-advantage-and-part-d-star-ratings-help-medicare-beneficiaries-compare>

³ Rise Health. (September 30, 2021). *Medicare Advantage Premiums Will Drop to Historic Lows in 2022*. <https://www.risehealth.org/insights-articles/medicare-advantage-premiums-will-drop-to-historic-lows-in-2022/>

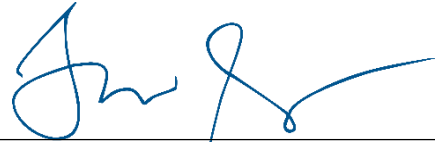
⁴ Avalere. (October 19, 2021). *More Medicare Advantage Plans Will Offer Non-Medical Benefits in 2022*. <https://avalere.com/insights/more-medicare-advantage-plans-will-offer-non-medical-benefits-in-2022>

challenges of the pandemic. We look forward to partnering with you and working on behalf of the tens of millions of older adults and people with disabilities whose health and economic security are protected under this program.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



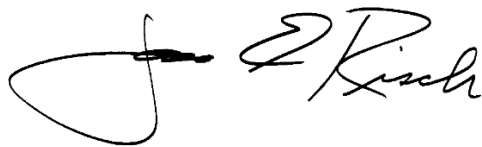
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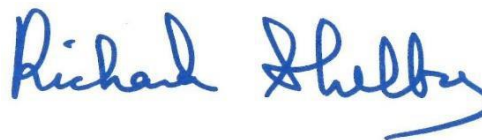
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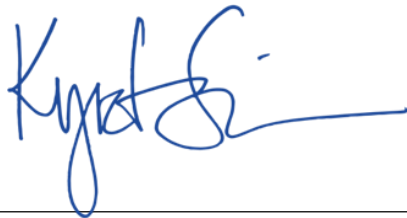
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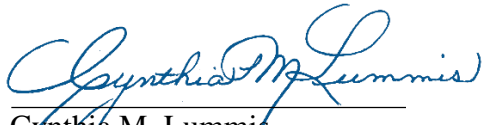
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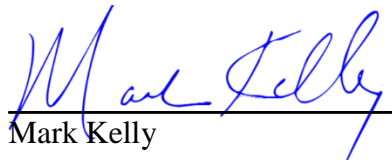
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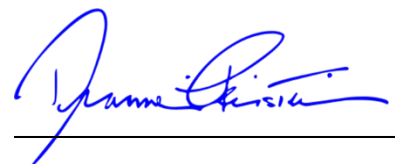
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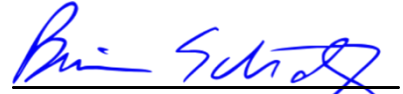
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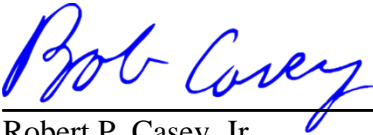
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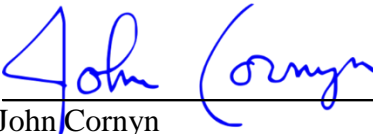
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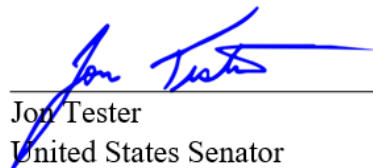
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