

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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February 27, 2015

Dr. Alan Speir
Chair, Workforce on Health Policy, Reform, and Advocacy
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
2921 Telestar Court
Falls Church, VA 20042

Dear Dr. Speir:

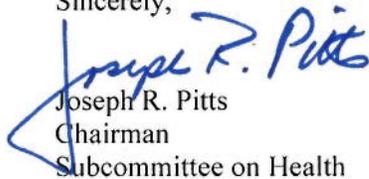
Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Health on Thursday, January 22, 2015, to testify at the hearing entitled "A Permanent Solution to the SGR: The Time is Now."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Friday, March 13, 2015. Your responses should be mailed to Adrianna Simonelli, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to Adrianna.Simonelli@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,


Joseph R. Pitts
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health

cc: Gene Green, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health

Attachment

Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Eliot Engel

1. I have been hearing from the physician community in New York for years about their growing frustration at the constant threat of significant reimbursement cuts. They frequently mention that the cost of running their practice is increasing each year and they are trying to properly treat patients with increasingly complicated medical conditions. All the while, facing double digit reimbursement cuts. It just isn't right.
 - a. Can you elaborate on why it is urgent for physicians and patient access to care that Congress reform the Medicare reimbursement system now and how another patch would be detrimental to our Medicare program?

The Honorable Ben Ray Lujan

1. The current Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Medicare payment system is unsustainable and needs to be fixed. In New Mexico, I continue to hear from providers and seniors about their frustration with SGR and the uncertainty that it creates. We cannot continue to patch this broken system, and we've been talking about a permanent fix for years. We need to deal with this now, and I support the bipartisan/bicameral SGR structural reform that was crafted last Congress that is supported by both provider and beneficiary groups.
 - a. In New Mexico there is a shortage of primary care physicians. Can you speak to how delivery system reform is connected to SGR repeal? How do you see the move away from fee for service impacting doctors' participation in Medicare?
 - b. Given all we know about the impact of primary care on quality, patient satisfaction, and costs, what more do you believe we should do to promote and support our primary care physicians?