

Testimony Summary – Tom Ryan – American Association for Homecare

Legislative Proposals to Support Patient Access to Medicare Services

Subcommittee on Health, House Energy & Commerce Committee – Jan. 8, 2026

CMS Final Rule and Competitive Bidding Program

CMS rulemaking threatens beneficiary access and undermines stable reimbursement for DME suppliers for several product categories.

H.R. 1703 – Choices for Increased Mobility Act

- 2016 DME MAC policy prohibited upgrades for titanium/carbon fiber wheelchairs, forcing beneficiaries to pay fully out-of-pocket.
- Policy contradicts Medicare's long-standing assignment and upgrade framework.
- Restores ability to pay for upgrades within a code.
- Improves access to lightweight titanium/carbon fiber chairs at no added cost to Medicare.
- Strong bipartisan support; AAHomecare urges passage.

H.R. 2005 – DME Reimbursement Relief for Non-Bid, Non-Rural Areas

- 2014 CMS rule applied competitive bidding rates nationally, ignoring rural and non-bid area cost differences.
- Result: 50%+ reimbursement cuts, widespread supplier closures (30%+), and reduced access.
- Congress has repeatedly intervened with temporary relief (Cures Act, CARES Act, 2022 Omnibus).
- Relief expired in 2024; 30% cuts were reinstated.
- Restores 75/25 blended rates for non-bid, non-rural areas for 1 year
- Supported by bipartisan sponsors and prior committee action.
- AAHomecare strongly supports immediate passage.

H.R. 2902 – Supplemental Oxygen Access Reform (SOAR) Act

- Competitive bidding has severely reduced oxygen reimbursement since 2011, harming access to appropriate oxygen modalities.
- Medicare does not reimburse respiratory therapist services, despite clinical necessity.
- High-flow patients often forced to rely on heavy, short-duration tanks, leaving many effectively housebound.
- Removes oxygen from competitive bidding.

- Creates a new reimbursement system including RT services.
- Establishes an oxygen users' bill of rights.
- Standardizes documentation via templates rather than medical records.
- Benefits 1.5 million Americans with COPD, heart disease, pulmonary fibrosis, and other advanced respiratory conditions.
- AAHomecare strongly supports passage.

Conclusion

- Home medical equipment is essential to cost-effective, patient-preferred care.
- H.R. 1703, H.R. 2005, and H.R. 2902 are critical to protecting Medicare beneficiary access.
- AAHomecare stands ready to work with the Subcommittee as legislation advances.