



**CALIFORNIA
HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION**

*Providing Leadership in
Health Policy and Advocacy*

June 26, 2019

Dear Members of the California Delegation:

California's hospitals have a singular mission — to provide care for those who need it. In difficult times, patients should be focused only on getting well, not on whether they can receive the care they need in a timely manner. The Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act (H.R. 3107) would improve patient care by removing unreasonable Medicare Advantage (MA) plan requirements that needlessly delay or deny patients access to medically necessary care. Ensuring patients have access to care is important to the California Hospital Association (CHA) and our more than 400 member hospitals and health systems, which is why we are pleased to support this bill.

This legislation would set standards related to electronic requests for prior authorization in the MA program, with the goal of streamlining the use of prior authorization to improve patient access to medically appropriate services; reducing administrative burden through automation informed by clinical decision support; increasing transparency for MA beneficiaries and providers; and augmenting oversight by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on the processes used for prior authorization.

Nearly 2.5 million Californians are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, representing 42% of state Medicare enrollment and 13% of national MA enrollment. Many Medicare beneficiaries live on modest incomes and have multiple chronic conditions that limit their activities of daily living. Our members report that many MA plans are now using prior authorization in broad ways that not only create hurdles for these vulnerable patients, but also lead to treatment delays that may endanger patients' health. While prior authorization is a tool that can be used to responsibly prevent unnecessary care and promote safe, evidence-based care, it should not be used simply to delay or deny necessary care.

For these reasons, CHA is pleased to support this legislation and asks that you cosponsor H.R. 3107. If you have questions please contact me at aurourke@calhospital.org.

Thank you for your support of California's hospitals and the patients they serve.

Sincerely,

/s/

Anne O'Rourke
Senior Vice President, Federal Relations