American Society for Dermatologic Surgery ASSOCIATION

ASDSA 2026 Federal In-District Fly-In Talking Points

ASK: Support H.R. 6160, the Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act and H.R. 8163, the Provider Reimbursement Stability Act to protect patient access to care by strengthening and stabilizing the Medicare physician payment system:

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health recently held a hearing on the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) and MACRA, highlighting growing bipartisan concern that continued payment instability threatens physician practices and patient access to care.

The Provider Reimbursement Stability Act (H.R. 8163)

- Would modernize outdated budget neutrality policies and improve payment predictability.
- Recently passed the House Ways and Means Committee unanimously (44-0).
- Current budget neutrality requirements trigger across-the-board payment reductions whenever CMS makes necessary updates to valuation policies within the MPFS.
- These automatic redistributions create unpredictable payment swings that complicate long-term planning for physician practices.
- Physicians have experienced more than a 10% reduction in Medicare payments over the past five years due to redistribution-related cuts tied to budget neutrality requirements.
- Even when specialties experience targeted increases, efficiency adjustments and practice expense changes often offset those gains, limiting the real-world impact.
- Modernizing budget neutrality policies would reduce volatility in physician reimbursement and improve the overall stability of the Medicare physician payment system.

The Strengthening Medicare for Patients & Providers Act (H.R. 6160)

- Would provide an annual inflationary update tied to the Medicare Economic Index (MEI).
- Medicare physician payments do not currently include a permanent annual inflationary update, unlike most other Medicare provider types.
- Since 2001, Medicare reimbursement rates have lagged 33% behind the rate of inflation growth, creating long-term instability for physician practices and threatening patient access to care.
- Dermatologic surgeons continue to face rising practice costs, including staffing, equipment, supplies, and compliance requirements, without corresponding updates in Medicare reimbursement.
- Without an annual inflationary update tied to the MEI, physicians will continue to face erosion in payment rates each year, making it increasingly difficult to sustain participation in Medicare.
- Providing a predictable annual update would help stabilize physician practices and ensure patients maintain access to care.

- Together, these complementary reforms would help stabilize physician reimbursement and protect patients' continued access to specialty physician care.
    - Failure to address these flawed payment rules jeopardizes continued access to essential dermatologic healthcare for these vulnerable patient populations who depend on Medicare.

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