



The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Waxman,

The Patients' Access to Responsible Care Alliance (PARCA) – a national coalition representing the interests of millions of patients and non-MD/DO health care professionals – has joined with other leading health care provider and patient advocacy organizations to urge you and your colleagues in Congress to oppose H.R. 2817, the “Protect Patient Access to Quality Health Professionals Act of 2013,” offered by Representative Andy Harris, M.D. This legislation would repeal a key patient-centered law aimed at helping to ensure that millions of Americans have greater access to quality health care services while reducing overall health care costs by encouraging competition in the healthcare marketplace among the nation’s providers.

If enacted, H.R. 2817 would repeal Section 2706(a), Title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act. This provision, based on policy supported by bipartisan leaders for more than a decade and ultimately included as part of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, serves to bar health plans from “discriminating with respect to participation under the plan or coverage against any health care provider who is acting within the scope of that provider’s license or certification under applicable State law.” In short, this provision prohibits health plans from discriminating against entire classes of qualified licensed healthcare professionals, such as non-MD/DO providers, solely on the basis of their licensure. Under this provision, health insurers can still address provider network quality and sufficiency for the availability of healthcare benefits to their enrollees.

Limiting patient access to and choice of qualified, licensed and certified health care providers reduces competition and concentrates market share resulting in generating economic benefit for other providers and ultimately increasing cost for consumers. Non-MD/DO professionals provide high-value, cost-effective care – and consumers should have the ability to choose their health care providers. Limiting patient access to and choice of qualified, licensed and certified non-MD/DO health care providers as H.R. 2817 intends, would further reduce competition and concentrate market share and economic benefit into the hands of select providers – a misguided policy that would increase costs for consumers and the delivery system as a whole.

For the reasons stated above our organizations urge, in the strongest possible terms, that members of congress withhold all support for H.R. 2817 and work to ensure that it is not enacted into law. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the issues we have raised which are of the utmost concern to our organizations and the large number of health professionals we represent.

The PARCA coalition comprises the American Academy of Audiology, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, American Chiropractic Association, American College of Nurse Midwives, American Occupational Therapy Association, American Optometric Association, American Physical Therapy Association, American Podiatric Medical Association, American Psychological Association, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists, and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners.

For more information visit: <http://accessparca.org/>

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