

Jan. 6, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Democratic Leader
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Schumer and Democratic Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the Academic Health Center (AHC) Working Group, 18 of the nation's top academic health centers working together on policy issues of mutual interest, we congratulate you on your leadership positions in the 115th Congress.

We write today in preparation for the congressional debate about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and potential changes to federally sponsored health care coverage. We are concerned that to repeal the ACA without simultaneously enacting legislation with similar comprehensive coverage could jeopardize the nation's health care system, affecting patients and the providers who care for them.

Policymakers of both parties share the common goal of ensuring Americans' access to affordable health care options. We are concerned that a "repeal without replace" strategy could destabilize the health care delivery system and drive up costs.

As you know, academic health centers are community anchors. We care for the most vulnerable, train the next generation of clinicians and researchers, drive innovation, and catalyze economic growth. Often, we are our communities' largest employers and vital economic engines, providing jobs at every level with opportunities for advancement. AHCs are also a resource to many rural communities, including the rural physician workforce, and an avenue to care via telemedicine.

We believe it is important that our institutions be part of this national conversation, as any substantive changes to the ACA, Medicaid and the insurance coverage landscape stand to have profound impacts on the patients we serve and our ability to provide world-class medical care while maintaining robust research and training commitments to the nation and the world.

AHC members can provide a view "from the trenches" on the clinical and economic impact of health care policy proposals. We have considerable knowledge of the real-world effects of even minor policy change and stand ready to share that experience with you. We were early adopters of bundled payment and shared risk mechanisms to drive quality while reducing cost, and we can provide candid assessments of the progress and impact of those initiatives. We strongly believe that through real efficiency in our delivery system, we can ensure sustainable health cost growth.

In most cases, our institutions are the largest Medicare and Medicaid providers in the region *and* are the hubs for discovery, innovation and state-of-the-art specialty care. That rich experience

provides us a unique perspective on the impact of federal policy change on the most vulnerable Americans. We encourage you to utilize the executives listed below, individually and collectively, as barometers to provide candid, evidence-based evaluation and reactions in real time.

We stand ready to work with you and your staff to improve and strengthen the nation's health care system.

Sincerely,



Paul Rothman, M.D.
CEO, Johns Hopkins Medicine



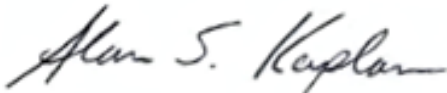
Steven Corwin, M.D.
President and CEO, New York-Presbyterian



Jeffrey Balsler, M.D., Ph.D.
President and CEO, Vanderbilt University
Medical Center



Kenneth Davis, M.D.
President and CEO, Mount Sinai Health System



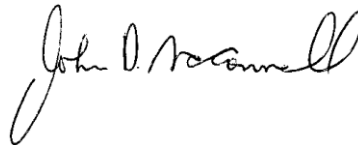
Alan Kaplan, M.D.
CEO, UW Health



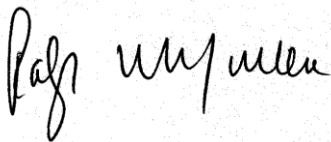
Jonathan Lewin, M.D.
Executive Vice President for Health Affairs,
Emory University



Steve Lipstein
President and CEO, BJC HealthCare



John McConnell, M.D.
CEO, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center



Ralph Muller
CEO, University of Pennsylvania Health System



Daniel Podolsky M.D.
President, UT Southwestern Medical Center



Kenneth Polonsky, M.D.
Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs
The University of Chicago



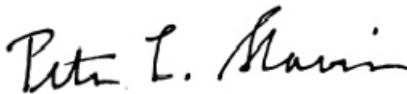
Sheldon Retchin, M.D.
CEO, Ohio State University Wexner Medical
Center



Marschall Runge, M.D., Ph.D.
CEO, University of Michigan Health System



Steven Safyer, M.D.
President and CEO, Montefiore Health System



Peter Slavin, M.D.
President, Massachusetts General Hospital



David Spahlinger, M.D.
Executive Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs,
University of Michigan Medical School



John Stobo, M.D.
Executive Vice President, UC Health



David Torchiana, M.D.
President and CEO, Partners HealthCare