Congress Must Act to Avoid Harmful Medicare Cuts in Tax Bill

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"With the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on the verge of being signed into law, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) is concerned about across-the-board cuts to Medicare that the measure will trigger. We urge Congress to protect Medicare beneficiaries with cancer and other medical conditions by passing additional legislation to avoid cuts to the program.

"Existing law requires automatic cuts to mandatory programs when the federal deficit is increased. The legislation Congress passed yesterday will trigger an estimated $25 billion cut to Medicare in 2018 unless Congress passes a waiver. Given that 60 percent of cancer patients in the United States are Medicare beneficiaries, a cut of this magnitude will cause further instability in the already fragile cancer care delivery system and threaten patient access to life-extending cancer care.

"Since sequestration took effect in 2013, a growing number of oncology practices—particularly small and rural practices—have expressed concerns over growing financial burdens and sustainability of the essential services they provide to patients. Additional, and larger, Medicare cuts which are now looming in 2018, could force these practices to close their doors or consolidate, which will reduce patient access to cancer care.

"ASCO’s core mission is to ensure that people with cancer have meaningful access to high-quality cancer care. We now strongly call on Congress to protect our patients by quickly
passing legislation to avoid unintended but significant harm to patients who rely on Medicare to receive their cancer treatment.”

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**About ASCO:**

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. (ASCO®) is committed to making a world of difference in cancer care. As the world’s leading organization of its kind, ASCO represents more than 40,000 oncology professionals who care for people living with cancer. Through research, education, and promotion of the highest-quality patient care, ASCO works to conquer cancer and create a world where cancer is prevented or cured, and every survivor is healthy. ASCO is supported by its affiliate organization, the Conquer Cancer Foundation. Learn more at [www.ASCO.org](http://www.ASCO.org), explore patient education resources at [www.Cancer.Net](http://www.Cancer.Net), and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.