Support for *Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act*

“Today, we ask Congress to say, ‘no more unnecessary delays in care’,” said Peggy Tighe, lead legislative counsel for the [Regulatory Relief Coalition](#), a group of eight physician specialty associations leading the charge in developing and advancing the legislation. Tighe added, “This common-sense reform brings transparency and oversight of insurers. By advancing this bill, Congress can save lives.”

“Neurosurgeons take care of very sick patients who suffer from painful and life-threatening neurologic conditions such as brain tumors, debilitating degenerative spine disorders, stroke and Parkinson’s Disease. The delays and denials associated with prior authorization mean that our patients often face permanent neurologic damage, and sometimes death. We are thrilled to support this bipartisan effort to advance sensible beneficiary protections to ensure that our nation’s seniors’ get the care they need, when they need it.” said Ann R. Stroink, MD, FAANS, a practicing neurosurgeon from Bloomington, Illinois and member of the board of directors of the [American Association of Neurological Surgeons](#).

“When their vision is at risk, ophthalmology’s patients can’t wait for their treatments,” said George A. Williams, MD, president of the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#). “We are thrilled that Representatives Suzan DelBene, Mike Kelly, Roger Marshall, and Ami Bera are taking bold steps that will protect America’s seniors from unnecessary barriers that deny them of timely access to medically necessary care.”

“Prior authorization requirements pose a significant challenge to ensuring the right treatment for the right patient at the right time,” said [American College of Cardiology](#) President Richard J. Kovacs, MD, FACC. Over the last several years the ACC has been working with stakeholders across the health care environment to find solutions that improve patient care and reduce administrative burden on the clinicians who serve them. The bipartisan prior authorization legislation announced today is an important step in making sure that patient care comes first.”
“AAOS is proud to support efforts of Representatives Suzan DelBene, Mike Kelly, Roger Marshall, and Ami Bera to reform the burdensome prior authorization requirements within Medicare Advantage plans,” said Kristy L. Weber, President of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons/American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons. “This additional paperwork creates unnecessary barriers for patients and weakens physicians’ ability to provide timely, critical care.”

“Current prior-authorization programs hinder patient access to medically necessary services and must be modified,” said Katy Neas, executive vice president for public affairs at the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). “Nearly 60 percent of APTA’s members report that current prior authorization requirements exponentially increase administrative burden and contribute to provider burnout. We thank Representatives DelBene, Kelly, Marshall, and Bera for their leadership on this important health care access issue.”

“We hear increasing concerns from our members that prior authorization is causing delays for their patients,” said Howard A. “Skip” Burris III, MP, FACP, FASCO, President of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. “These policies are particularly harmful for patients with cancer because severe delays in a patient’s treatment can lead to disease progression and other serious complications. Patients with cancer deserve timely access to the best treatment available for their condition. The bipartisan legislation introduced today takes an important step to address this growing problem by streamlining prior authorization practices.”

“The American Osteopathic Association is pleased to support the Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act,” said Bill Mayo, DO, President of the American Osteopathic Association. “This legislation is an important first step in improving transparency and limiting unnecessary delays in access to care for patients, while simultaneously reducing physician and administrative prior authorization burdens.”

“Restrictive prior authorization practices can cause unnecessary, stressful and potentially life-threatening delays for cancer patients,” said Paul Harari, MD, FASTRO, Chair of the American Society for Radiation Oncology. "While the system was designed as a path to streamline and strengthen access to treatments, it is in fact frequently harmful to cancer patients prescribed radiation therapy, particularly by wasting precious time and causing them immense anxiety. We applaud Reps. DelBene, Kelly, Marshall and Bera for their leadership in introducing this bipartisan legislation to bring needed reform to a broken system.”

“Prior authorization impacts health care providers’ ability to provide timely care to our patients; this not only delays access to vital treatments, but can put our patients’ lives at risk,” said Hashem B. El-Serag, MD, MPH, AGAF, president, AGA Institute. “This issue is a top priority for the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA), and we support the Improving Seniors Timely Access to Care Act of 2019, which provides simplification and efficiency in the prior authorization process, allowing health care providers to spend more time caring for their patients.”