



April 28, 2020

President Donald Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington D.C. 20500

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear President Trump, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned economists believe that “surprise” medical bills, which patients sometimes receive after they are treated by a provider unknowingly outside of their insurance network are a real public policy concern that policymakers should work to address.

However, we are opposed to the enactment of price controls that would peg provider reimbursement to a “benchmark” rate picked by the federal government. Such proposals represent a direct government intervention in health care that would hurt access to care, especially for patients in rural areas.

No matter the policy area, government price controls often result in shortages and market distortions. These outcomes should be avoided, especially when dealing with important health care services like emergency room visits and physician care.

As Congress and the Administration continue to work to address surprise medical bills, we respectfully urge you to reject federal price controls, including a benchmark rate.

Sincerely,

Adam Gifford -- California State University, Northridge

Aileen Sampson -- Clemson University (2002-07)

Alan C. Shapiro -- University of Southern California

Alexander Katkov -- Johnson & Wales University

Ali Karayalcin -- Florida International University

Ali Reza -- San Jose State University

Ananda Ganguly -- Claremont McKenna College

John Seater -- North Carolina State University

John Silvia -- Wells Fargo

John W. Goodell -- University of Akron

Joseph Duncan -- The Dun & Bradstreet Corp.

Joseph Zoric -- Franciscan University of Steubenville

Judd W. Patton -- Bellevue University

Julie A. Nelson -- University of Massachusetts, Boston

Andrew Busch -- Commodity Futures Trading Commission
Andrew Weintraub -- Temple University
Ann Sherman -- DePaul University
Anthony J. Greco -- The University of Louisiana-Lafayette
Arturo Porzecanski -- American University
Bahram Adrangi -- The University of Portland
Barry J. Seldon -- The University of Texas at Dallas
Bert Ely -- Ely & Company, Inc.
Boyd D. Collier -- Tarleton State University
Brian W. Kelly -- Asian Century Quest
Bruce Hutchinson -- University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
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Charles de Bartolome -- University of Colorado
Charles N. Steele -- Hillsdale College
Christine P. Ries -- Georgia Institute of Technology
Christopher C. Barnekov -- Federal Communications Commission
Christopher S. Martin -- Hillsdale College
Corinne Krupp -- Duke University
David A. Bessler -- Texas A&M University
David A. Dittman -- Cornell University
David Gillette -- Truman State University
David R. Burnett -- U.S. Foreign Service
David R. Henderson -- Hoover Institution, Stanford University
David Ranson -- HCWE & Co.
Dennis E. Logue -- Dartmouth College
Dennis Johnson -- University of South Dakota
Dianne Betts -- Southern Methodist University
Don M. Chance -- Louisiana State University
Don Oswald -- California State University, Bakersfield
Don Sabbarese -- Kennesaw State University
Karen M Travis -- Pacific Lutheran University
Karen Vorst -- University of Missouri, Kansas City
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Kemm Farney -- PEPCO Holdings
Kenneth Eugene Lehrer -- Lehrer Financial Advisory Services
Lee Adkins -- Oklahoma State University
Lee Ohanian -- Hoover Institution, Stanford University
Lonny Wilson -- William Penn University
Lowell Bassett -- University Of Washington
LuAnn M. Duffus -- Midwest Data Center
Lydia Harris -- Goucher College
Manuchehr Shahrokhi -- Global Finance Journal
Margaret Malixi-Leong -- California State University, Bakersfield
Mark Rush -- University of Florida
Martin Kessler -- Econometrics Corporation
Martin Regalia -- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Michael Bond -- University of Arizona
Michael L. Marlow -- Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
Michael Sullivan -- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Michael Wohlgenant -- North Carolina State University
Michele Fratianni -- Indiana University
Michele Marra -- North Carolina State University
Mike Cosgrove -- University of Dallas
Minh Q Dao -- Eastern Illinois University
Mira Farka -- California State University, Fullerton
Moheb Ghali -- The University of Hawaii
Murray Sabrin -- Ramapo College of New Jersey
Nancy Roberts -- Arizona State University
Naveen Khanna -- Michigan State University
Nicholas A. Lash -- Loyola University Chicago
Nilopa Shah -- University of California, Irvine
Noralyn Marshall -- Risk Management Advisors, LLC
Olga Bepalova -- International Monetary Fund

Donald L. Luskin -- Trend Macrolytics
Doug Frechtling -- The George Washington University
Douglas Patterson -- Virginia Tech
Dustin Chambers -- Salisbury University
Edmund Estes -- North Carolina State University
Elinda F. Kiss -- University of Maryland
Elizabeth C. Bogan -- Princeton University
Emmanuel Egbe -- City University of New York
Floyd H. Duncan -- Virginia Military Institute
Frank Falero -- California State University
Frank Hefner -- College of Charleston
G. Geoffrey Booth -- Michigan State University
G. Michael Phillips -- California State University, Northridge
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Gary L. French -- Nathan Associate Inc.
George Reisman -- Pepperdine University
Gerald Dwyer -- Clemson University
Gerry Suchanek -- University of Iowa
Gregg Dimkoff -- Grand Valley State University
Harry P. Bowen -- Queens University of Charlotte
Hiuko Adams -- Georgia State University
Ivan Pongracic, Jr. -- Hillsdale College
J. J. Arias -- Georgia College & State University.
James C. Miller III -- Office of Management & Budget (1985-88)
James F. Smith -- EconForecaster, LLC
James Leiby -- University of Maine
James Peery Cover -- University of Alabama
James R. Owen -- Midwestern State University
Jamus Jerome Lim -- ESSEC Business School
Jason Hsu -- UCLA
Jay A. Johnson -- Southeastern Louisiana University
Jerry Zimmerman -- University of Rochester
Jesse Hoyt Hill -- Tarrant County College SE Campus
Paul Rubin -- Emory
Paul Schoofs -- Ripon College
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PJ van Blokland -- University of Florida
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Richard Claycombe -- McDaniel College
Richard E. Ericson -- East Carolina University
Richard Hay -- Pittsburg State University
Richard J. Cebula -- Jacksonville University
Richard Wobbekind -- University of Colorado
Robert (Bob) DeYoung -- University of Kansas
Robert D. Niehaus -- Robert D. Niehaus, Inc.
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Sara Adler Mandelbaum -- Western Governor's University
Scott Bradford -- Brigham Young University
Scott E. Hein -- Texas Tech University
Sherri Wall -- University of Alaska, Fairbanks
Stephen Happel -- Arizona State University
Stephen J. Entin -- U.S. Department of the Treasury (1981-88)
Steven C. Myers -- The University of Akron
Steven E. Landsburg -- University of Rochester
Steven J. Shapiro -- New York Institute of Technology
Stuart G. Hoffman -- PNC Financial Services Group
Theodore D. Covey -- Agriculture Economist
Thomas E. Lehman -- Indiana Wesleyan University
Timothy F. Slaper -- Indiana University
Timothy Terrell -- Wofford College
Tony Lima -- California State University, East Bay
Victor Canto -- La Jolla Economics

Joe Cobb -- The University of Chicago (1977)
John A. Haslem -- University of Maryland
John B. Egger -- Towson University
John C. Goodman -- Goodman Institute for Public Policy Research
John G. Matsusaka -- University of Southern California
John Hoftyzer -- Missouri State University
John Johnson -- Utah State University
John M. Griffith -- Old Dominion University
John Merrifield -- University of Texas, San Antonio
John Ruggiero -- University of Dayton
Vinod Agarwal -- Old Dominion University
W. Bentley MacLeod -- Columbia University
W. Douglas McMillin -- Louisiana State University
W. Ken Farr -- Georgia College and State University
Walter Wessels -- North Carolina State University
Warren Coats -- International Monetary Fund
Wayne Crews -- Competitive Enterprise Institute
William Buchanan -- Valdosta State University
William F. Ford -- Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta
William Jennings -- California State University, Northridge
Zagros Madjd-Sadjadi -- Winston-Salem State University

*Note - Affiliation of signatories is listed for identification purposes only and in no way indicates institutional support for this letter.