Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 20, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
H-323, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
H-204, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Democratic Leader Pelosi:

We commend the substantial efforts of our House colleagues thus far to reform the Medicare physician payment system and share their urgency to address this critical issue this year. More should be done and we stand committed to permanently repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula this year.

With the current full cost of repeal cut in half to $139 billion, repealing the SGR formula is a fiscally responsible step toward overall reform. Congress, over the past decade, has spent $146 billion in short term SGR patches, more than the current cost of repeal. Continuing to enact short-term patches is bad fiscal policy—equivalent to paying the monthly minimum on a credit card bill—and increases the cost of full repeal.

Moreover, fiscal uncertainty makes it difficult for physician practices, which are small businesses, to invest in the necessary infrastructure to better serve their patients. Full repeal of the SGR also paves the way for reasonable, comprehensive payment reform and protecting Medicare beneficiary access to physician services.

We should not pass up this chance to repeal the SGR—with fiscally responsible offsets—and enact a permanent solution. This year represents a great opportunity to repeal the flawed SGR formula, reform health care delivery to drive quality and efficiency, and set Medicare on a more stable and predictable course for current and future generations of patients and physicians. We appreciate your attention to this issue and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

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Member of Congress

Dan Maffei
Member of Congress

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