



Sound Policy. Quality Care.

December 17, 2020

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Thune
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support of S. 5044, the *Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act*

Dear Senators Brown and Thune:

As the Alliance of Specialty Medicine (Alliance), our mission is to advocate for sound federal health care policy that fosters patient access to the highest quality specialty care. As patient and physician advocates, the Alliance writes in support of your legislation, **S. 5044, the *Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act***, which would improve the prior authorization process in Medicare Advantage (MA) plans through increased transparency and the establishment of an electronic prior authorization process.

Prior authorization is a cumbersome process that requires physicians to obtain pre-approval for medical treatments or tests before rendering care to their patients. The process for obtaining this approval is lengthy and typically requires physicians or their staff to spend the equivalent of two or more days each week negotiating with insurance companies — time that would better be spent taking care of patients. Patients are now experiencing significant barriers to medically necessary care due to prior authorization requirements for items and services that are eventually routinely approved. Your legislation will help streamline, standardize, and modernize prior authorization in the MA program.

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine supports opportunities to improve the prior authorization process to ensure safe, timely, and affordable access to care for patients. Your legislation would reduce the administrative burdens of prior authorization in the MA program, and for this reason the Alliance extends our strong support of S. 5044, the *Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act*.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Specialty Medicine

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American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery • American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American College of Mohs Surgery • American College of Osteopathic Surgeons • American Gastroenterological Association
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association • American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery • American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Plastic Surgeons • American Society of Retina Specialists • American Urological Association
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations • Congress of Neurological Surgeons • National Association of Spine Specialists