

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 25, 2014

Marilyn Tavenner  
Administrator  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Ms. Tavenner:

I am writing to express my concerns with the deep funding cuts CMS has proposed for the Medicare Advantage (MA) program for 2015.

The MA program serves approximately 780,000 seniors and disabled persons in Ohio, accounting for 38 percent of the Medicare beneficiaries in our state. These individuals have chosen MA plans because they appreciate the coordinated care, disease management services, wellness and prevention programs, and other innovative benefits offered by their plans.

I am deeply concerned, however, that the funding cuts proposed by CMS would undermine the high quality, affordable coverage that currently is available to seniors through the MA program. A new report by international management consulting firm Oliver Wyman estimates that implementation of the proposed cuts would leave MA enrollees facing premium increases and benefit reductions of \$35 to \$75 per month in 2015, or \$420 to \$900 for the entire year. These numbers translate into a 5.9 percent total cut to MA payments in 2015. Considering that MA funding cuts in the range of four to six percent are already being implemented in 2014, I am concerned that a second consecutive year of sharp cuts would be harmful to MA enrollees in Ohio.

I strongly urge you to reevaluate the proposed cuts and protect MA enrollees by maintaining current payment levels in 2015. I would appreciate hearing back from you regarding steps you will be taking to stabilize the MA program for seniors in Ohio and across the nation.

Sincerely,



U.S. Senator Rob Portman