



April 2, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman, Energy & Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member, Energy & Commerce Committee
2322 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Walden,

anesthesiologist assists during a covered surgical procedure, even in an in-network hospital.

While 21 states have already passed laws or issued regulations aimed at protecting patients from balance bills, the protection and comprehensiveness offered by these proposals vary significantly from state to state and none are comprehensive enough to protect all consumers. The need for a comprehensive, uniform policy to protect all Americans from balanced bills as a result of medical transport or treatment necessitates action from federal policymakers. We recognize that differences in the regulation of emergency transportation will require lawmakers to re-examine authorities currently assigned to the Department of Transportation in order to adequately protect patients.

Access to quality, affordable health care is a priority for AHA and represents a key concern for the patients we represent. We implore policymakers to take a multi-faceted approach to comprehensively address balance billing:

Patients should be protected from balance billing. In instances when a patient unknowingly receives care from an out-of-network provider or in emergency situations, patients should not be held responsible for resulting balance bills. In these circumstances, the maximum financial liability should be no greater than the in-network cost-sharing amount would be for the same services. This protection should exist regardless of the health insurance plan the patient holds.

Actionable and meaningful transparency. Timely, actionable, and easily

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts with you as you work to address balance bills. If you have any questions or would like to discuss these comments further, please contact Katie Berge, Federal Government Relations Manager for the American Heart Association at katie.berge@heart.org or (202) 785-7909.

Sincerely,



Mark Schoeberl
Executive Vice President for Advocacy

Cc:

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
The Honorable Ron Wyden

The Honorable Bobby Scott
The Honorable Virginia Foxx

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
The Honorable Patty Murray

The Honorable Richard Neal
The Honorable Kevin Brady