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Neurosurgery Leader Welcomes Introduction of the Patients First Act

Washington, DC — Today, the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) welcomed the [introduction](#) of the Patients First Act (H.R. 9693), a bipartisan effort developed through collaboration between clinician members of the Republican Doctors Caucus and Democratic Doctors Caucus to address longstanding structural challenges within the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) including physician payment updates, quality reporting requirements, and incentives for participation in alternative payment models.

Alexander A. Khalessi, MD, MBA, FAANS, Chair of the Washington Committee for the AANS and CNS, issued the following statement:

"We welcome the introduction of the Patients First Act and commend the physician members of Congress from both parties who have worked collaboratively to develop one of the most comprehensive Medicare Physician Fee Schedule reform packages introduced in recent years."

"For too long, physicians and patients have operated under a Medicare payment system that relies on short-term fixes rather than durable solutions to the structural challenges facing medical practice. Independent physician practices continue to disappear, consolidation continues to accelerate, and patients are waiting longer for care. The willingness of Congress to engage in serious, bipartisan conversations about long-term reform represents an important and encouraging development."

"We are especially grateful to our physician colleagues in Congress for their engagement with the AANS and CNS throughout this process and for creating an open and collaborative environment in which we could share the experiences of practicing neurosurgeons. Those perspectives are critical to understanding how Medicare policy affects patient access, practice sustainability, and the delivery of specialty care."

"We look forward to continuing to work with Congress as the Patients First Act moves through the legislative process and to further refining these reforms to improve patient access and strengthen the delivery of neurosurgical care."

The legislation is led by the co-chairs of the Democratic and Republican Doctors Caucuses, including Representatives John Joyce, MD (R-PA), Greg Murphy, MD (R-NC), and Kim Schrier, MD (D-WA).

[According to the bill sponsors](#), the Patients First Act aims to modernize the Medicare physician payment system by promoting long-term payment stability, reducing administrative burden, and strengthening independent physician practice. The legislation would tie physician reimbursement updates to an inflationary measure, establish a new hybrid payment model for primary care, create a physician-led

process for developing quality metrics, reform participation requirements for alternative payment models, and modernize Medicare's budget neutrality policies. Collectively, these reforms are intended to improve patient access to care, preserve competition, and address the market forces that have accelerated consolidation and reduced access to physician-led care in communities across the country.

The AANS and CNS have long advocated for reforms that improve the long-term stability and predictability of the Medicare physician payment system, reduce unnecessary administrative burden, and preserve patient access to quality specialty care nationwide.

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*The **American Association of Neurological Surgeons** (AANS), founded in 1931, and the **Congress of Neurological Surgeons** (CNS), founded in 1951, are the two largest scientific and educational associations for neurosurgical professionals in the world. These groups represent over 10,000 neurosurgeons worldwide. Neurological surgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the entire nervous system, including the spinal column, spinal cord, brain and peripheral nerves. For more information, please visit www.aans.org, www.cns.org and www.neurosurgery.org.*