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## **Growing National Healthcare Coalition Urges Congress to Reject Bureaucratic Price Controls in Next Relief Bill**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, [the Coalition Against Rate-Setting \(CARS\)](#) urged Congress to keep the next Coronavirus relief bill clean and reject any attempts by lawmakers to institute rate-setting (price controls) as a way to “fix” surprise medical billing. Surprise medical billing occurs when patients discharged from an in-network hospital receive an out-of-network bill from an attending doctor. Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) and Rep. Greg Walden (R-Ore.) have indicated their willingness to insert rate-setting into the next relief bill to address this issue, despite well-documented evidence on the harms of healthcare price controls. CARS, a nationwide coalition of free market and consumer groups has doubled in membership from 14 in January to 28 today. A full listing of the organizations in CARS can be found [here](#).

“Doctors and nurses are on the front lines risking their lives treating COVID-19 patients, and now, lawmakers want to cut their pay by mandating onerous price controls. While thousands of Americans are suffering from the worst pandemic in more than 100 years, Sen. Alexander and Rep. Walden want to give Washington, D.C bureaucrats more control over healthcare decisions.” – **David Williams, President, Taxpayers Protection Alliance**

“Government benchmarking of hospital and physician fees equates to price controls. The federal government could establish arbitrarily low rates for doctors providing out-of-network care by insisting these payments reflect insurers greatly discounted in-network average. The losses physicians and hospitals experience a result of benchmarking would be passed onto community hospitals and emergency departments, financially depressing these facilities, particularly in rural areas where there is very little room between profitability and liability.” - **Bob Carlstom, President, AMAC Action**

"Proposed surprise billing measures would hurt doctors across the country, particularly in rural areas, who are already fighting on the frontlines of the pandemic, while benefiting big insurance companies. America needs creative, free-market solutions for surprise billing that is not based on a complex, harmful government scheme of rate-setting." – **Jessica Anderson, Executive Director, Heritage Action**

“The facts are clear: Government rate-setting or price controls never work as intended and invariably lead to shortages and less innovation. Amid the current coronavirus pandemic, now is the worst possible time to mandate a counterproductive rate-setting scheme that would most harm the vital healthcare professionals on the front lines of this fight.” – **Jeff Mazzella, President, Center for Individual Freedom**

“Unfortunately, it’s no surprise that politicians continue to use a very real crisis to push their pet legislation or projects. The price controls proposed as a ‘fix’ to so-called ‘surprise billing’ are no exception. In a time of crisis, more than ever, we need to let markets work for the healthcare of all Americans. Rate-setting is the opposite.” - **Jason Pye, Vice President of Legislative Affairs, FreedomWorks**



“These are trying times for Americans who are concerned about their health, their jobs and their civil liberties. Now is not the time for cynical gamesmanship by partisans and ideologues who want to advance their agenda of price controls under the guise of responding to a national crisis. Price controls are not an effective response to surprise medical billing. Price controls usher in a *de facto* form of socialized medicine and should be resisted at every turn.” -**Jim Martin, Founder/Chairman, 60 Plus Association.**

“National rate-setting is a pathway to socialized medicine. You don’t have to believe me, this is what House Democrat Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone told the House Progressive Caucus. It would be a tragic mistake to incorporate policies within any additional stimulus package which shifts cost burdens to the very health professionals we are all depending upon in this fight against the COVID-19 virus.” – **Rick Manning, President, Americans for Limited Government**

“Price controls lead to scarcity and rationing. The last thing we need less of right now is critical first responders.” – **Ryan Ellis, President, Center for a Free Economy**

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*The Coalition Against Rate-Setting is an alliance of like-minded organizations that recognizes the perils of bureaucrats setting prices in the American healthcare system.*