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February 12, 2020

The Honorable Ron Kind
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Kind and Moore,

On behalf of the Wisconsin Hospital Association, I write to urge your support of the Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020. This legislation is in line with WHA's long-held position that any solution to surprise medical billing must protect patients while preserving Wisconsin's high-quality, high-value health care system. We believe this legislation strikes the right balance between protecting patients while preserving free market negotiations between providers and insurers and keeping both parties on an even playing field.

Wisconsin has a proud tradition of supporting efforts to promote transparency. Every hospital in our state has reported price and quality information through the websites PricePoint and CheckPoint since 2004. These tools allow consumers to find data on the prices and quality of care provided by hospitals, giving them tools to better understand the value of health care services before they schedule them. The PricePoint website also includes an insurance checklist to help patients determine out-of-pocket costs and avoid surprise medical bills. Thanks to this commitment to transparency, along with Wisconsin's highly integrated health care environment and competitive insurance market, our state already has one of the lowest rates of surprise billing in the country.

The Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020 would offer consumers additional protections while preserving Wisconsin's nation-leading health care environment. WHA has supported using independent dispute resolution to resolve surprise billing, because we believe it is the fairest way to resolve disputes between insurers and providers. It is also the approach favored by most Wisconsinites. A poll done in August of 2019 by Fabrizio, Lee & Associates found that 75% of Wisconsinites support this approach, while only 6% support using a benchmark rate to fix surprise billing disputes.

WHA encourages your support of this legislation in the House Ways & Means Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eric Borgerding'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a small triangle at the end of the line.

Eric Borgerding
President and CEO, WHA