

February 12, 2021

**VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Crapo  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
United State Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Wyden, Crapo, Murray and Burr:

The Center for Medicare Advocacy (the Center) strongly supports the nomination of California Attorney General Xavier Becerra for Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Center, founded in 1986, is a national, non-profit, non-partisan law organization that works to advance access to comprehensive Medicare, health equity, and quality health care.

Mr. Becerra has been a champion of expanding access to health care, from his time in Congress to his most recent role as California's Attorney General. During his twelve terms in Congress, including while serving on the House Ways & Means Health Subcommittee, Mr. Becerra worked to improve the Medicare program as well as health care access more broadly.

Our organization strongly supported his introduction of the Medicare Savings Programs Improvement Act of 2007 to expand cost-sharing subsidies for low-income individuals dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, many provisions of which were included in the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 and the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015. Among other things, he also worked to eliminate the arbitrary caps on outpatient therapy, expand Medicare coverage of medical nutrition services, and require the HHS Secretary to conduct research on issues related to socioeconomic status related to Medicare's value-based programs.

As Attorney General of California, he led a group of states defending the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in *California v. Texas*; the Center was honored to support this effort by submitting an amicus brief along with AARP and Justice in Aging in support of California and the other states.

In his role as California AG, Mr. Becerra was at the forefront of challenges to policies that harm the health of older adults and people with disabilities, such as the previous administration's expansion of the "public charge" rule. As a strong advocate for residents of nursing facilities, AG Becerra led 17 State Attorneys General in an effort to stop the previous administration from rolling back regulatory protections for nursing home residents, and later opposed proposed revisions to the nursing facility Requirements of Participation that would have scaled back appropriate oversight. Further, his demonstrated commitment to equity includes protecting women and LGBTQ+ individuals from unlawful discrimination in health care, and a recognition of the unequal effect that environmental damage has on the health of people of color and other communities.

AG Becerra's extensive legislative and executive experience make him uniquely qualified to serve as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Further, his personal experience as the proud son of immigrants will help ground his efforts to address the disparities in our health system laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Becerra is the right leader for HHS at this moment, not only for overseeing the response to the COVID pandemic, but also for protecting and building health care rights for Medicare beneficiaries, and for all Americans. The Center for Medicare Advocacy enthusiastically supports the nomination of Mr. Becerra. We urge his swift confirmation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith A. Stein". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Judith A. Stein  
Executive Director/Attorney