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May 4, 2011

The Hon. Max Baucus
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Hon. Orrin Hatch
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Baucus and Hatch:

On behalf of the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology (ASPN), I am writing to urge you to hold confirmation hearings for Dr. Donald Berwick as Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). As this country continues to struggle with rising health care costs and most recently a reexamination of the Medicare and Medicaid program structures, it is imperative that CMS have a confirmed administrator with authority and vision to steer the agency in this new environment.

Founded in 1969, the American Society for Pediatric Nephrology (ASPN) is a professional society composed of pediatric nephrologists whose goal is to promote optimal care for children with kidney disease and to disseminate advances in the clinical practice and basic science of pediatric nephrology. The ASPN currently has over 500 members, making it the primary representative of the pediatric nephrology community in North America. Our membership is committed to improving the quality and value of the US healthcare delivery system, and many of our members have participated in the process of bettering Medicare's payment and quality policies with respect to end-stage renal disease (ESRD) in the pediatric patient population.

As you know, ESRD is unique in that Medicare covers those with this disease regardless of age. The ASPN, therefore, finds itself advocating for the pediatric patients who are covered by Medicare – an often overlooked population. Dr. Berwick's background as a pediatrician and researcher is similar to that of our members, many of whom assume a multi-faceted role as clinicians, educators and researchers. Dr. Berwick's background lends itself to leading CMS in a new direction and he fully understands the challenges that the US healthcare system faces. We believe that he is uniquely prepared to deal with those challenges.

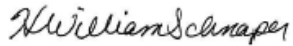
Physicians and patients face an environment where health care costs continue to grow. As the largest health insurer with over \$800 billion in expenditures annually, CMS must be prepared to respond to health care providers and its beneficiaries. For the health care system

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and CMS to better meet the needs of the population, data must be used to measure quality outcomes, efficiency and value. Dr. Berwick's commitment to health services research, which the Society shares, has the potential to improve how CMS pays for care, and to set an example for private payers.

In conclusion, the members of the ASPN believe that Dr. Donald Berwick will bring CMS into a new era and serve this nation well as CMS Administrator. We respectfully request that confirmation hearings before the Senate Finance Committee be held as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



H. William Schnaper
President