



National Black Nurses Association, Inc.
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 910, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (301) 589-3200 • Fax: (301) 589-3223



President
Dr. Martha A. Dawson

October 22, 2019

Dear Members of the U.S. Congress:

On behalf of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA), which is comprised of 117 chapters in 35 states, I am writing to ask for support and co-sponsorship of HR 2573 and S. 433, The Home Health Payment Innovation Act of 2019, introduced by Representatives Terri Sewell (D-AL) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL) and Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). This bill safeguards the Medicare home health program by preventing a 6.42 percent or \$1 billion “behavioral assumption” cut from going into effect on January 1, 2020.



Executive Director
Dr. (Hon) Millicent Gorham

This bill would help to ensure stability in the home health care sector, which provides care to millions of this country’s Medicare recipients of color. While it is important to continue to pay thoughtful attention to payment reform, it is most important to ensure that one of our most vulnerable populations, the elderly, are provided the appropriate home health care services. Payment reform has placed value on keeping elderly patients out of acute care settings. Without the appropriate home health care services, we will end up over taxing the acute care setting and increasing the number of unnecessary visits to the emergency department. Our policymakers should place as much value on providing health care services in the home to fragile, elderly patients.

A cut of \$1 billion will cause dire consequences to the home health community and have a negative impact for the 3.5 million Medicare home health care patients – a population of elderly Americans who are older, sicker, and poorer than all other Medicare beneficiaries. In fact, Medicare home health patients are 30 percent more likely than other Medicare beneficiaries to be ethnic or racial minorities.

I urge your support for H.R. 2573/S. 433 which would prevent this draconian \$1 billion, 6.42 percent rate cut to the Medicare home health program. America’s senior citizens and the nurses who care for them appreciate your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Martha A. Dawson, President
National Black Nurses Association, Inc.