



Charles N. Kahn III
President and CEO

August 24, 2023

The Honorable Michael Burgess
2161 Rayburn House Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Vicente Gonzalez
154 Cannon House Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Burgess and Congressman Gonzalez,

The Federation of American Hospitals (FAH) is pleased to endorse *H.R. 4968* – the *GOLD Card Act of 2023*, which would exempt qualifying providers from prior authorization requirements under Medicare Advantage (MA) plans, thereby streamlining the prior authorization process and enabling patients to receive timely access to the care they deserve.

The FAH is the national representative of more than 1,000 leading tax-paying hospitals and health systems throughout the United States. FAH members provide patients and communities with access to high-quality, affordable care in both urban and rural areas across 46 states, plus Washington, DC and Puerto Rico. Our members include teaching, acute, inpatient rehabilitation, behavioral health, and long-term care hospitals and provide a wide range of inpatient, ambulatory, post-acute, emergency, children's, and cancer services.

Under the current system, Medicare Advantage plans routinely employ prior authorization policies, procedures, and protocols that delay and limit care for Medicare beneficiaries. Inefficiencies in the process impose significant burdens and costs on patients and providers alike and may prompt patients to delay or forego needed care. In fact, more than 40 percent of physicians surveyed recently by the American Medical Association reported that prior authorization delays necessary care.

The *GOLD CARD Act of 2023* is an important step forward in recognizing that health care providers and clinicians – not insurance companies – are best equipped to treat patients in real time and will limit unnecessary costs and red tape for patients and caregivers. Prior authorization programs create significant costs for hospitals with time consuming administrative processes that divert clinicians away from direct patient care and require teams of people to gather documentation, spend time on the phone with insurers, and reprocess claims. These processes are administratively burdensome due to unclear and constantly changing requirements,

insufficient personnel and network gaps, variation across insurers, and rework for appeals and add-on requests. A Gold Card program that allows high performing providers to avoid these costly burdens and improve patient access to care would significantly improve patient care and coordination across providers – while lowering overall costs.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We urge Congress to remove inappropriate barriers to patient care and streamline the prior authorization process by enacting the *Gold Card Act* this work period. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our support of the legislation further, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of my staff at (202) 624-1534.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to a man, written in black ink. The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a prominent initial 'A' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.