Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy:

The Society of Gynecologic Oncology (SGO) appreciates your leadership and efforts to mitigate scheduled cuts to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule in the “Protecting Medicare and American Farmers from Sequester Cuts Act” last year. This action provided critical relief to physicians and protected Medicare beneficiaries’ access to high-quality care. However, physicians are again facing payment cuts on January 1, 2023, and we urge you to take action to address these cuts and stabilize physician payment before the end of the year.

The SGO is the premier medical specialty society for health care professionals trained in the comprehensive management of gynecologic cancers. Our 2,000 members, who include physicians, nurses, and other advanced practice providers, represent the entire oncology team dedicated to the treatment and care of patients with gynecologic cancers.

Without immediate Congressional action, gynecologic oncologists and other physicians face a pay cut of approximately 8.5% on January 1, 2023. These payment reductions come at a time when physicians continue to struggle with the effects of COVID-19, increasing inflation, and physician payments that have stagnated over the last two decades. According to an AMA analysis of Medicare Trustees data, Medicare physician payment has been reduced by 20% when adjusted for inflation from 2001–2021.¹ The Medicare Physician Fee Schedule does not have a consistent mechanism for updating payments, and the results are clear: payment for Medicare physician services have not kept pace with those delivered outside of the physician office, the consumer price index, or practice costs.

On January 1, 2023, Medicare payment for physician services will be reduced by two factors: a 4.5 percent cut to the Medicare conversion factor and a 4 percent across-the-board Medicare PAYGO cut. The combination of these payment cuts deeply threatens Medicare beneficiary access to high-quality care and jeopardizes the sustainability and viability of physician practices. On September 13, Representatives Ami Bera (D-CA) and Larry Bucshon (R-IN) introduced the Supporting Medicare Providers Act of 2022, which will eliminate the 4.42 percent cut to the conversion factor, addressing a sizable portion of the upcoming Medicare reduction. For these reasons, the SGO urges Congress to pass the Supporting Medicare Providers Act of 2022 and eliminate the PAYGO reduction to avert these payment cuts before the end of the year and work with physicians to implement systemic reforms that bring stability to the Medicare physician payment system ending this cycle of annual payment reductions and preserving beneficiary access to medical services.

The SGO stands ready to work with you to address the flaws in the Medicare payment system. Thank you again for your leadership and for all that you are doing to support patients and providers. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to Erika Miller at emiller@dc-crd.com

Sincerely,

Stephanie V. Blank, MD
SGO President, 2022-2023

cc: Chairman Ron Wyden, Senate Finance Committee
Ranking Member Mike Crapo, Senate Finance Committee
Chairman Richard Neal, House Ways & Means Committee
Ranking Member Kevin Brady, House Ways & Means Committee