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June 16, 2022

The Honorable Michael Burgess, MD  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Vincent Gonzalez  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ronny Jackson, MD  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Burgess, Gonzalez and Jackson,

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN), the world's largest neurology specialty society representing over 36,000 neurologists and clinical neuroscience professionals, is strongly committed to high-quality accessible care for patients with neurologic conditions. One in six people live with a brain or nervous system condition, including Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, ALS, multiple sclerosis, and headache. The annual cost of treating these disorders in the US is more than \$600 billion.

Neurologists seek to provide high-value care for their patients at the lowest cost possible. However, appropriate care for a patient is often delayed by the timely and burdensome prior authorization process. To that end, the AAN applauds you for the introduction of H.R. 7995 The Gold Card Act, to assist in reducing the burden of prior authorization and ensuring patients have timely access to care.

Utilization management tools such as prior authorization are very time consuming and expensive administrative requirements that take away from direct patient care. According to a recent [survey](#) from the American Medical Association (AMA), 94 percent of physicians report that the prior authorization process can delay access to necessary care. For neurologic patients with chronic conditions, there is often no "one size fits all" course of treatment. Prompt access to care is essential to minimize risks of dangerous complications and side effects.

Furthermore, according to the AMA, physicians in the United States average 15 hours each week focused on processing prior authorization requests. Addressing the burden of prior authorization requires the hiring of additional full-time employees for many practices and can be another source of waste within the health care system. The AAN is very concerned by the expansion of prior authorization throughout the health care system and supports efforts to protect the physician-patient decision-making process.

*The Gold Card Act* will help reduce the burdens of prior authorization in Medicare Advantage by streamlining processes and giving physicians who had prior authorization requests for prescriptions and treatments approved at least 90% of the time a "gold-card" exemption status. These improvements will benefit many

neurologic patients who require timely access to care for their chronic conditions. The legislation strongly coincides with H.R. 3173 *the Improving Seniors' Access to Timely Care Act*, legislation that remains a top priority for the AAN.

Thank you for taking a leadership role on this critical issue. If you have any questions or requests for additional information, please contact Derek Brandt, Director of Congressional Affairs at [dbrandt@aan.com](mailto:dbrandt@aan.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Orly Avitzur MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Orly Avitzur, MD, MBA, FAAN  
President, American Academy of Neurology