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TMA Urges Congress to Support Increased Competition, Transparency in Health Care

Tennessee Medical Association made the following statement in support of the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Health Subcommittee hearing on transparency and competition.

Tennessee's physicians commend the U.S. House of Representatives Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health for its hearing today to explore legislative solutions for increased competition, transparency and choice in our health care system.

Misguided policies have contributed to a decade-long trend of widespread consolidation throughout the health care system.

Patient-centered healthcare demands that Tennessee's patients have actual choice of where they receive their care, based on quality and cost of services. This requires more openness and transparency than exists today. We support H.R. 977 on the premise that we may end the antiquated federal policy restricting physicians from owning and operating hospitals. Lifting this moratorium will allow physicians to invest in their communities and offer our state's patients additional choice and control of their own care delivery.

By allowing for greater competition and transparency, Tennesseans can receive care in the most efficient, convenient, and cost-effective setting, which is often their physician's office. For this to be a reality requires site neutral payment policies.

The inequities of current site reimbursement policy, coupled with Medicare's payment disparity that pays more for services delivered in a hospital-owned setting, on top of inadequate Medicare physician payment updates for inflation, make it very difficult for many physicians to sustain a private practice.

Tennessee's physicians support legislation that stands up for physician-led health care, giving patients lower costs, higher quality and more choice in their care.

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About the Tennessee Medical Association

The Tennessee Medical Association is a nonprofit advocacy organization representing more than 9,800 Tennessee physicians. We advocate for public policies, laws and rules that promote healthcare safety and quality for all Tennesseans and improve the non-clinical aspects of practicing medicine. tnmed.org