

September 15, 2015

The Honorable Joe Manchin  
United States Senate  
306 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC, 20510

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Dear Senator Manchin:

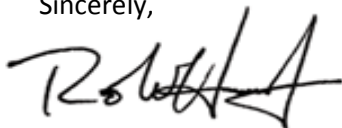
The Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM) is pleased to offer its support of S. 688, the *Establishing Beneficiary Equity in the Hospital Readmission Program Act of 2015*. The bill addresses serious concerns about the Hospital Readmission Reduction Program by seeking reforms that better reflect the realities of patient care and the ability for healthcare providers to prevent readmissions.

SHM represents the nation's more than 48,000 hospitalists who work primarily in acute inpatient settings. They specialize in caring for hospitalized patients, including large numbers of Medicare, Medicaid, and dually-eligible beneficiaries. Hospitalists are leaders in care coordination and in efforts to reduce hospital readmissions through safe and effective care transitions.

The Readmissions Reduction Program needs fine tuning to better account for preventable readmissions—those within the reasonable control of healthcare providers. Currently, the program continues to use a questionable 30-day readmission threshold and also fails to take into account the realities of caring for patients with varying needs and illnesses. This legislation will help account for these differences among patients and prevent the risk of unfair penalties being imposed on hospitals and providers who treat our most vulnerable patients.

SHM greatly appreciates your leadership and commitment to refining the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program and improving the efficiency of the healthcare system. We look forward to continued work with you in securing the passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Robert Harrington, Jr., MD, SFHM  
President, Society of Hospital Medicine