

To: Members, House Health Policy Committee
From: Adam Carlson, Senior Director, Government and Political Affairs
Date: October 17, 2019
Re: House Bills 4459 (H-2), 4460 (H-2), 4990, & 4991
MHA Position: Neutral

The Michigan Health & Hospital Association supports efforts to end the practice of surprise medical billing in Michigan. The last thing patients and their families should worry about when it comes to their healthcare are unexpected out-of-pocket expenses due to surprise medical bills. Patients deserve certainty about their health insurance coverage and potential expenses for the services they seek, as well as access to and coverage for emergency care.

Michigan hospitals have actively supported ending the practice of surprise medical billing. Many have pushed specialty physician groups to be contracted with the same insurer networks as the hospitals where they practice to ensure continuity of coverage. In addition, many hospitals voluntarily staff robust patient financial assistance departments, and provide cost estimates to patients before non-emergent procedures.

All Michigan hospitals participate with the largest commercial insurance carrier in our state. In addition, many hospitals in Michigan participate with most other major insurers in the state that sell policies in their region. Our members work with insurers on those infrequent occasions that insurers happen to be out-of-network to resolve claims without government intervention. Hospitals and payers know the value and need of the services that they provide, and we appreciate the fact that this legislation does not disrupt hospital-insurer negotiations. This legislation will allow hospitals and insurers to continue to treat everyone in the state and recognize the multitude of contracts hospitals have reached with payers – **while removing the patient from the fight.**

We acknowledge that this legislation is targeted toward those that actively engage in surprise medical billing. We hope that in addition to this legislation, more work can be done to educate patients and provide easy access to understandable provider network information so patients can make informed healthcare decisions for themselves and their families.

Michigan hospitals remain laser-focused on providing high-quality care to every patient served. That mission extends to making care affordable, understandable and transparent. We look forward to continuing to work to protect patients from surprise medical bills.

If you have any questions on the contents of this memo, please feel free to contact me at (517) 703-8601 or acarlson@mha.org.

Brian Peters, Chief Executive Officer