

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

December 18, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Burwell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
101 Independence Avenue  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell,

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation is currently evaluating a Health Care Innovation Award (HCIA) that provides Medicare coverage for the evidence-based Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). It is our understanding that the actuarial analysis for this program is being fast-tracked due to promising early results. We support this decision, and urge you to release the actuarial analysis within two months. We also ask that the Secretary outline the process she will undertake to determine whether the DPP merits broader expansion under the Medicare program, and engage our offices in that decision-making process.

The personal and financial impact of diabetes is staggering. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 11 million Americans over the age of 65 have been diagnosed with diabetes, and an additional 400,000 are diagnosed each year. The American Diabetes Association estimates that one out of every three Medicare dollars is spent on diabetes. Without an intervention, this number is only likely to grow since half of individuals above age 65 have prediabetes and are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

Fortunately, a prevention program exists. Over 15 years ago, the National Institutes of Health funded the largest lifestyle health program aimed at people with prediabetes to see if a lifestyle intervention could outperform a drug in terms of reversing the course of diabetes. That research showed that programs like the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program does perform better than other pharmaceutical treatments and can reduce incidence of diabetes by 70% among seniors living with prediabetes.

These promising results have catalyzed support from both public and private insurance providers; thus far, 29 private payers and 3 Medicaid programs cover the National Diabetes Prevention Program, and 8 additional states cover the program for their state employees. Importantly, this program could result in tax payer savings. For instance, an analysis conducted by Avalere Health estimated that if Medicare provided coverage for the National Diabetes Prevention Program, the federal government could save \$1.3 billion over ten years.

We understand that a comprehensive independent evaluation of the HCIA award is underway. The evaluation will assess program utilization rates, changes in health outcomes, and cost savings from reduced hospitalizations and medication use. We urge you to complete this

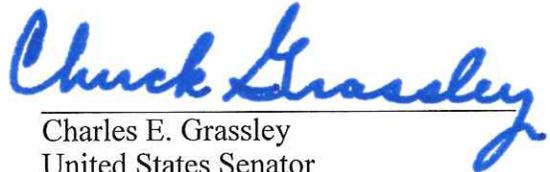
actuarial analysis as soon as practicable in order to inform future decisions regarding the expansion of this important program.

Thank you again for your work on this important issue.

Sincerely,



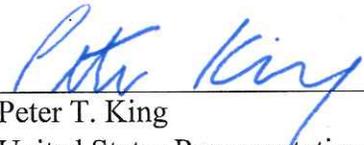
Al Franken  
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senator



Susan A. Davis  
United States Representative



Peter T. King  
United States Representative