

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT F. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Jeff Collins
President
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals of the Northwest
500 NE Multnomah St
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Collins,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

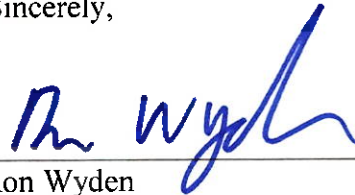
I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

CC: Ceci Connolly, ACHP

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT F. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Bruce D. Broussard
President and Chief Executive Officer
Humana
1100 Employers Boulevard
DePere, WI 54115

Dear Mr. Broussard,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

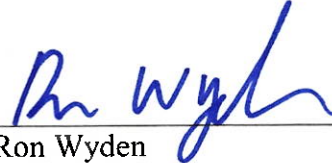
I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

CC: Matt Eyles, AHIP

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTÉZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Dr. Thomas Eagan, DO
Board Chair
AllCare Advantage
1701 NE 7th Street
Grants Pass, OR 97526

Dear Dr. Eagan,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON W. TEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Doug Boysen, JD, MHA
President and Chief Executive Officer
Samaritan Advantage Health Plan
2300 NW Walnut Blvd
Corvallis, OR 97330

Dear Mr. Boysen,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Angela Dowling
President
Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon
200 SW Market Street
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Ms. Dowling,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

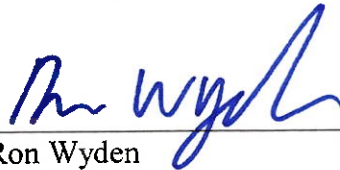
I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

CC: Kim A. Keck, BCBSA
Matt Eyles, AHIP

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Christopher Ciano
President
Aetna Medicare
28588 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 380B
Southfield, MI 48034

Dear Mr. Ciano,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Jeff Fox
President and Chief Executive Officer
ATRIO Health Plans
2965 Ryan Drive SE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Fox,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON , CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENDW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS H. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERRON BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Robert Goottee
Chief Executive Officer
Moda Health Plan, Inc.
601 SW Second Avenue Suite 900
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mr. Goottee,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Eric Hunter
President and Chief Executive Officer
CareOregon Advantage
315 SW Fifth Ave.
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mr. Hunter,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Chris Hummer
Chief Executive Officer and Plan President
Trillium Community Health Plan
555 International Way Building B
Springfield, OR 97477

Dear Mr. Hummer,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

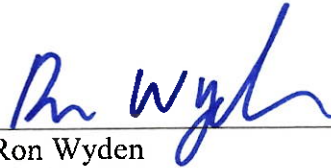
I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

CC: Matt Eyles, AHIP

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Tim Noel
Chief Executive Officer
UnitedHealthcare Medicare & Retirement
Five Centerpointe Drive Suite 600
Lake Oswego, OR 97035

Dear Mr. Noel,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Michael White
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Providence Medicare Advantage Plans
3601 SW Murray Blvd.
Beaverton, OR 97005

Dear Mr. White,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

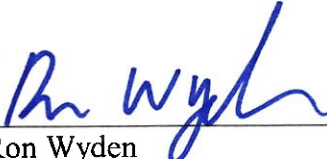
I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

CC: Matt Eyles, AHIP

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Ken Provencher
President & Chief Executive Officer
PacificSource Medicare
2965 NE Conners Ave.
Bend, OR 97701

Dear Mr. Provencher,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

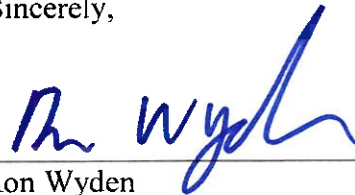
I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance

CC: Ceci Connolly, ACHP

RON WYDEN, OREGON, CHAIRMAN

DEBBIE STABENOW, MICHIGAN
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
ROBERT MENENDEZ, NEW JERSEY
THOMAS R. CARPER, DELAWARE
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO
MICHAEL F. BENNET, COLORADO
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
CHUCK GRASSLEY, IOWA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA
ROB PORTMAN, OHIO
PATRICK J. TOOMEY, PENNSYLVANIA
TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA
BILL CASSIDY, LOUISIANA
JAMES LANKFORD, OKLAHOMA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

JOSHUA SHEINKMAN, STAFF DIRECTOR
GREGG RICHARD, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

July 28, 2021

Brian Ternan
Chief Executive Officer
Health Net
13221 SW 68th Parkway, Ste 200
Tigard, OR 97223

Dear Mr. Ternan,

Last month, Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest experienced extreme heat. The temperature in Portland peaked at 116 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of the heat, over 50 people in Portland died, while more than 100 people across the state also perished. A preliminary report from Multnomah County found that among the people who died none had access to central air conditioning and only one had a working air conditioning unit.

During the extreme heat, community organizations alongside city, county, and state governments worked together admirably to create cooling centers to keep people safe. However, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, it is understandable that many older adults and people with chronic conditions were reluctant to congregate at indoor facilities.

While the June heatwave is past, I worry that there will be more extreme heat events this summer and poor air quality due to wildfires. It will be a benefit to Oregonians everywhere if we take this time to figure out how to be best prepared for the next heatwave that is sure to come.

I authored the CHRONIC Care Act to provide Medicare Advantage (MA) plans with new flexibility to meet the needs of chronically ill members. Under the law, MA plans can offer Special Supplemental Benefits for the Chronically Ill (SSBCI) that are “non-primarily health-related” in order to maintain or improve the health or function of the individual. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services 2021 regulations specifically refer to indoor air quality and equipment and services as an example of non-primarily health related SSBCI benefit. Under the ongoing Public Health Emergency, MA plans have been given the opportunity to file mid-year benefit changes in order to best meet the needs of their members. This means that your plans could update their benefits today to provide air conditioning and air filtration units to its chronically ill members in Oregon.

In light of the ongoing pandemic and extreme weather events, it seems to me that our collective goal should be to keep older adults and people with vulnerable chronic conditions safe at home. I strongly urge your organization to leverage these flexibilities to provide eligible Oregonians with

air conditioning units and air filtration units to do just that. In my view, these items are not extra benefits, but essential benefits that could mean the difference between life or death.

Together, we can help Oregonians get through these events. I look forward to partnering with you to provide essential benefits to Oregonians as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance