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February 11, 2020

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
U.S. House of Representatives
212 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Reed
U.S. House of Representatives
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Panetta and Reed:

On behalf of our members and all older Americans nationwide, AARP is pleased to endorse your bipartisan Helping Our Senior Population in Comfort Environments (HOSPICE) Act (H.R. 5821) to help improve the oversight and enforcement of quality care for Medicare beneficiaries and their families receiving hospice.

At the most challenging time in an individual's life, they turn to hospice for care and comfort. This is a meaningful service for families as well, providing respite care and grief and loss counseling. Unfortunately, a 2019 Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General report found deficiencies in the quality of care provided by some hospices. It also found that hospices did not always provide necessary services under the Medicare hospice benefit. Your bill implements the Inspector General's recommendations to improve services for individuals and their families, increase transparency and information for consumers about hospice providers, and enhance oversight and enforcement to help ensure everyone receives the quality care they need and deserve.

AARP appreciates your bipartisan leadership to improve care for individuals with Medicare and their families. We look forward to working with you on this bill as well as on the issue of long-term, terminally ill individuals losing access to the hospice services on which they and their families rely. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff contact Rhonda Richards on our Government Affairs staff at r-richards@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

Bill Sweeney
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs