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The Honorable Chiquita Brooks-LaSure  
Administrator  
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

December 21, 2021

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

I am writing to express my deep concern over the \$21.60 monthly increase in Medicare Part B premiums that are scheduled to take effect in 2022. It is critical that Part B remains affordable to seniors, so I urge you not implement this steep increase in out-of-pocket costs. Without access to critical coverage of physician services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, and durable medical equipment provided by Part B, seniors will be forced to forgo essential health needs.

In the 2022 Medicare Part B rate announcement, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services claims that the 5.9 percent Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) that seniors will see in their Social Security checks next year will “more than cover the increase in the Medicare Part B monthly premium.”<sup>1</sup> However, the Medicare Part B premium increase, at 14.5 percent (from \$148.50 in to \$170.10), far outpaces the COLA adjustment.

Additionally, that CMS took into account potential Medicare coverage of the newly FDA approved physician-administered Alzheimer’s drug, Aduhelm,<sup>TM</sup> is highly problematic since Medicare does not even cover that drug at this time. Therefore, seniors are paying the price for a \$56,000 a year drug<sup>2</sup> that they do not even have access to. Moreover, the increase reflects projected rising costs of Medicare, which is in part the result of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3</sup> While I understand that health care costs are higher because of the pandemic, they should not be paid for on the backs of our seniors who are on fixed incomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. “CMS Announces 2022 Medicare Part B Premiums.” November 12, 2021. <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-announces-2022-medicare-part-b-premiums>

<sup>2</sup> Biogen. “Biogen and Eisai launch multiple initiatives to help patients with Alzheimer’s disease access ADUHELM<sup>TM</sup>.” June 7, 2021. <http://media.biogen.com/news-releases/news-release-details/biogen-and-eisai-launch-multiple-initiatives-help-patients>

<sup>3</sup> Bunis, Dena, AARP. “Medicare Part B Premium Increase for 2022 Largest Ever.” November 15, 2021. <https://www.aarp.org/health/medicare-insurance/info-2021/part-b-premiums-increase.html>

To that end, I urge you to reconsider your decision to increase premiums based on these flawed factors so that seniors don't have to cut corners on things like food or medicine in order to pay for their health insurance. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raul Ruiz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Raul" and last name "Ruiz" clearly distinguishable.

Raul Ruiz. M.D.  
Member of Congress