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# neurosurgery

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**Neurosurgeons Applaud Congress for Passing Legislation to Streamline Prior Authorization**

*House action is a critical step in advancing legislation to ensure timely access to care in Medicare Advantage.*

Washington, DC—Today, the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) applauded the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the *Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act* ([H.R. 3173](#)). This legislation would streamline prior authorization in the Medicare Advantage (MA) program.

Led by Reps. **Suzan DelBene** (D-Wash.), **Mike Kelly** (R-Pa.), **Ami Bera**, MD, (D-Calif.) and **Larry Bucshon**, MD (R-IN) in the House, this legislation would ensure that seniors get timely decisions about the care provided by MA by:

- Establishing an electronic prior authorization program;
- Standardizing and streamlining the prior authorization process for routinely approved services, including establishing a list of services eligible for real-time prior authorization decisions;
- Ensuring prior authorization requests are reviewed by qualified medical personnel; and
- Increasing transparency around MA prior authorization requirements and their use.

“The use of prior authorization has increased significantly over the last several years — causing unacceptable delays and denials of medically necessary care. Our patients cannot afford to wait or jump through unnecessary hoops to get care for painful and life-threatening neurologic conditions such as brain tumors, debilitating degenerative spine disorders, stroke and Parkinson’s Disease. This progress is a vital step towards preserving patients’ timely access to care,” said **John K. Ratliff**, MD, FAANS, FACS, a neurosurgeon at Stanford University and chair of the AANS/CNS Washington Committee.

Dr. Ratliff concluded, “America’s neurosurgeons want to thank House leaders for bringing this bill forward for a vote. Now it’s time for the Senate to finish the job and pass this bill before the end of the year.”

To bring improved transparency and oversight to the Medicare Advantage program, the AANS and the CNS have joined forces with the [Regulatory Relief Coalition](#) — a group of national physician specialty organizations advocating for a reduction in Medicare program regulatory burdens to protect patients’ timely access to care. The RRC has been an important ally in the efforts to advance the *Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act*.

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*The American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), founded in 1931, and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS), founded in 1951, are the two largest scientific and educational associations for neurosurgical professionals in the world. These groups represent over 10,000 neurosurgeons worldwide. Neurological surgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the entire nervous system, including the spinal column, spinal cord, brain and peripheral nerves. For more information, please visit [www.aans.org](http://www.aans.org), [www.cns.org](http://www.cns.org) and [www.neurosurgery.org](http://www.neurosurgery.org).*