September 11, 2014

The Honorable John Lewis
U.S. House of Representatives
343 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lewis:

On behalf of the 62,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and surgical specialists of the American Academy of Pediatrics who are committed to the attainment of optimal health for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I write to express support for the Medicaid Parity Act of 2014 (H.R. 5353), introduced on July 31, 2014.

Medicaid is a critical program for children, who constitute more than half of all enrollees. Unfortunately, lower payment rates in Medicaid (close to only two-thirds of Medicare rates, on average) have historically created substantial barriers to accessing various health care services. According to the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, a large body of research has shown that comparatively low payment rates are a substantial factor affecting physician participation in Medicaid and access to services for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Your legislation would continue federal support for states to pay at Medicare rates for many important Medicaid services for children. We look forward to working with you to enact the legislation as well as future efforts to ensure access to care for all children in the program to all medically necessary services provided by all pediatricians, pediatric subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists regardless of the site of service.

We commend you for taking this opportunity to invest in the pediatric population’s healthy development. If you have any questions regarding this or other payment issues, please contact Robert Hall at RHall@aap.org.

Sincerely,

James M. Perrin, MD, FAAP
President

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