



The Honorable John Barrasso  
307 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

May 26, 2016

Dear Senator Barrasso:

On behalf of the [Continuing Medical Education \(CME\) Coalition](#), I am writing in support of S. 2978, the "Provider Payment Sunshine Act," which you introduced yesterday.

The CME Coalition wholeheartedly endorses your legislation, which appropriately exempts CME and certain educational materials from the reporting requirements of the Physician Payment Sunshine Act (Sunshine Act). While the Sunshine Act intended to make payments from commercial entities to physicians more transparent, we believe that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) has confused and misread Congressional intent, providing a mix of regulatory interpretations that have called into question whether independent, accredited CME activities could also be subject to the law's reporting requirements. We believe strongly that the current guidance from CMS creates an unworkable patchwork of interpretations by stakeholders, which often leads to the creation of disincentives for physicians to participate in independent, accredited CMS activities both as faculty and attendees. This outcome, which drives down physician participation in continuing education and ultimately leads to poorer patient outcomes, is the wrong prescription for our nation's healthcare system.

Your approach, which enjoys significant bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, and was overwhelmingly passed by that body as part of the "21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures" legislation, will help end much of the confusion among physicians and within the CME stakeholder community. We believe that your bill will reduce physician reluctance to participate in accredited CME by eliminating the "chilling effect" that exists today as a result of Open Payments reporting. We look forward to your bill's consideration and passage by the full Senate.

As an organization that represents the full continuum of continuing medical education stakeholder, including doctors, educators and supporters, we believe that accredited CME is a mainstay of physician learning and a keystone to improving patient outcomes. As a physician yourself, you understand the importance of enhancing, rather than limiting, physician access to independent continuing education, and your leadership is invaluable to us.

We thank you for your support on this important issue, and look forward to working with you to drive greater support for the bill in the Senate, as well as serving as a subject matter resource to you as the legislative process continues.

Sincerely,

*Chris Lamond*

Chris Lamond  
Executive Director