



Leadership Council
of Aging Organizations

June 3, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Jeffries, and Minority Leader Schumer:

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) is a coalition of 67 leading national nonprofit organizations working throughout the United States to provide direct services to older adults, strengthen communities, and advance policies to support the health, independence, and well-being of older adults. Since 1980, LCAO has worked with all Administrations and Congresses on a bipartisan basis to help our country realize the opportunities and meet the challenges of a growing older adult population.

On behalf of the millions of traditional Medicare beneficiaries served by our member organizations, we write to share our alarm that beneficiaries are being denied needed medical care and needlessly suffering harm because of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) ongoing implementation of the "Wasteful and Inappropriate Service Reduction (WISeR) model." Despite efforts by Congress and the Administration to curb prior authorization abuses in private Medicare Advantage plans, the WISeR model introduces – in *traditional* Medicare – prior authorization requirements for medical procedures beneficiaries may need to maintain function, health, and independence. It is also troubling that the model appears designed to incentivize denials of care by for-profit contractors with financial rewards.

Recent reports indicate that the program may be harming Medicare beneficiaries and undermining their ability to manage chronic and painful conditions.¹ For example, WISeR targets epidural steroid injections, procedures relied on by a significant number of beneficiaries to manage chronic spinal pain. Chronic pain in older adults is linked to serious negative outcomes, such as prolonged suffering, social withdrawal, reduced mobility, and increased strain on the healthcare system.² WISeR also imposes barriers to access to the non-invasive nerve stimulations that enable beneficiaries with Parkinson's Disease to

¹ See, e.g., The Austin Chronicle, [AI Now Decides if Texas Medicare Patients Receive Certain Types of Care](#), April 23, 2026; The Seattle Times, [New Medicare program using AI leaves WA patients in pain](#), March 18, 2026.

² Domenichiello AF, Ramsden CE, [The Silent Epidemic of Chronic Pain in Older Adults](#), Progress in Neuro-Psychopharmacology and Biological Psychiatry, 2019 Jul 13.



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maintain gait and balance and reduce medication burden.³ Delays in access and denials of care for older adults needing these and other procedures subject to WISeR increase beneficiaries' risks of disability and potentially worsen their underlying conditions.

WISeR also raises separation of powers and due process concerns given the May 12, 2026, [determination](#) by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that the WISeR model notice constitutes a rule subject to the Congressional Review Act (CRA). Congress should exercise its authority under the CRA to nullify the model by passing a joint resolution of disapproval.

We are also concerned about the lack of transparency with respect to implementation of the model. For example, it is not clear whether CMS plans to make available data on claims denial rates and re-submissions of claims; algorithms used for artificial intelligence determinations; the amounts of incentive “savings” payments to participating companies; the results of CMS audits of company participants or reviews of adverse impacts on beneficiary health.

For these reasons, we urge you to:

- Support and pass S.J. Res. 192 and H.J. Res. 187 to nullify-WISeR.
- Support and pass [H.R. 5940/S. 3480](#), Seniors Deserve SMARTER (Streamlined Medical Approvals for Timely, Efficient Recovery) Care Act, which would bar implementation of the WISeR model and ensure that beneficiaries continue to have timely access to the care they need.
- Include a prohibition on the implementation of prior authorization in traditional Medicare in the fiscal year 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations Bill.
- Request that GAO review implementation of the model to evaluate CMS's oversight of the pilot and any adverse impacts of delays and denials on beneficiary health and well-being.

We look forward to working with you to protect Medicare beneficiary choice and reduce barriers preventing individuals with traditional Medicare from accessing the person-centered, quality care to which they are entitled.

Sincerely,

Max Richtman
Chair

³ Evancho, A., Do, M., Fortenberry, D., et al. [Vagus Nerve Stimulation in Parkinson's Disease: a Scoping Review of Animal Studies and Human Subjects Research](#), npj Parkinsons Disease 10, 199 (2024).