

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
PENNSYLVANIA

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 26, 2019

The Honorable Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, District of Columbia 20201

Dear Administrator Verma:

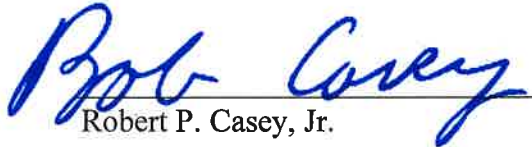
I am writing to urge the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to extend time-limited equitable relief (TLER) for Marketplace enrollees who miss their window to enroll in Medicare Part B beyond the current September 30, 2019 deadline. While I appreciate the previous extension of this provision, CMS has thus far failed to provide adequate education to Marketplace enrollees regarding this critical transition. Extension of TLER will help ensure that retirees and people with disabilities who inadvertently or unknowingly make Medicare enrollment errors have access to this reprieve.

As you know, the consequences of Medicare enrollment missteps can be significant, often leading to coverage gaps or lifetime late enrollment penalties. According to the Congressional Research Service, average late enrollment penalties amounted to a Part B premium increase of more than 30 percent in 2017. This causes undue harm to seniors and people with disabilities who delayed enrollment in Medicare simply because they were uninformed or misinformed of complex enrollment rules.

I agree with the 80 national and state organizations representing older adults, people with disabilities, insurers and health care providers that have expressed concern that CMS has failed to provide sufficient education to end ongoing Marketplace to Medicare enrollment mistakes. CMS must educate Marketplace enrollees prior to their transition to Medicare. While CMS develops improved notification, extending TLER for at least one year would address some of the concerns raised by advocates. It would provide individuals the ability to request reprieve from coverage gaps and late enrollment penalties caused by a lack of information. I urge you to extend TLER before the policy expires on September 30, 2019.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure all Americans have the tools and information they need to make well-informed and timely Medicare enrollment decisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bob Casey", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator