



THE AMERICAN CONGRESS
OF OBSTETRICIANS
AND GYNECOLOGISTS

Office of the President
Thomas M. Gellhaus, MD, FACOG

December 12, 2016

Dear Dr. Price,

Your nomination to be Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services presents you with the opportunity for enormous authority over our Nation's health care system. Physicians have a unique and critical viewpoint on the delivery of quality healthcare and we appreciate that you will bring a medical perspective to this position.

We also hope that you will take advantage of this new platform to significantly strengthen your partnership with the women's health community. ACOG is proud to represent more than 57,000 ob-gyns and partners in women's health, and we invite you to consider us a valued resource as you consider policy changes that will impact America's ob-gyns and the women to whom we provide care.

As an organization dedicated to protecting women's health, we are eager to work with you on science- and evidence-based proposals to expand access to high quality, affordable, comprehensive health care for all Americans. Unfortunately, some of the bills you supported in Congress would not serve women's health well if implemented as HHS policy. The advancement of women's health depends on federal research funding, insurance coverage of contraception, and appropriate federal responses to public health emergencies. Strong and stable Medicare and Medicaid programs enable our health care workforce to protect our most vulnerable citizens, and help ensure safe and healthy moms and babies. Planned Parenthood clinics provide critical preventative health care services to women and men. Abortion is health care. ACOG remains committed to protecting each of these critical aspects of women's health.

Throughout your time in Congress, you have worked closely with us on numerous issues important to our specialty and the broader medical community, including Medicare physician payment reform, repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board, and medical liability reform. We have appreciated your dedication to these topics, and we commend you for proactively seeking out physicians' input and expertise. Your consistent efforts to find common ground and work together on shared goals are laudable, and your commitment to accomplishments, rather than talking points, is unfortunately all too rare in Washington. We hope that you will use your new role as an opportunity to expand on these collaborative practices.

There is a great deal of work to be done in the coming years. As you said recently in [an interview with MedPageToday](#), "Medical decisions should be made by patients, families, and doctors – not policymakers and insurance companies." We support this statement wholeheartedly, and look forward to working with you to accomplish this and other shared priorities.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Gellhaus, MD, FACOG
President

Hal C. Lawrence, III, MD, FACOG
Executive Vice President and CEO