



## Independent Women's Voice Supports the Lower Costs More Transparency Act, H.R. 5378

December 7, 2023

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

Independent Women's Voice (IWW) supports The Lower Costs More Transparency Act, H.R. 5378, as at least a first step toward protecting American consumers from overcharges and lowering the costs of healthcare and coverage. But it still needs work.

It is critical to codify the price transparency rules, but also significantly strengthen penalties and enforcement. All consumers deserve real prices, **not** estimates. We note that hospitals have had THREE YEARS to comply with these rules while patients suffered from deliberate price obscurity and private equity made lots of money benefiting from hiding prices. It is past time we stopped playing delay games. Patients need the true upfront price transparency they were promised.

When healthcare consumers have upfront prices, whether they be patients, employers, union purchasers, or workers, they can identify wide price variation, choose lower-priced, affordable care, realize substantial savings, and protect themselves from rampant overcharges, billing errors, medical debt, and fraud. The average 10x variation in prices in hospitals for the same services is strong evidence that patients are being gamed.

Americans must have the right to clearly compare prices, bills, and receipts, prevent overcharges, and lower their costs. 100 million Americans have medical debt and must have the ability to verify and understand their bills so that if there is an error or overcharge, they know it and have recourse.

We urge Congress to continue its bipartisan commitment to implementing systemwide healthcare price transparency. We must ensure there are no lobbyist games of delays and estimates - which are useless and unaccountable pretend transparency - and rollbacks of healthcare

consumers' rights from the existing rules put in place by both the Biden and Trump Administrations.

The Lower Costs, More Transparency Act is critical to restoring trust in our healthcare system and giving American health consumers what they need to make informed decisions. It's time for Congress to side with patients and businesses across America who deserve genuine up front actual prices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "HRH", is written over a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Heather R. Higgins

CEO

*Independent Women's Voice*