



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dec. 15, 2020

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## **NAHU Statement on New Surprise Billing Agreement**

Washington, DC -- Janet Trautwein, CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU), which represents more than 100,000 licensed health insurance agents, brokers, consultants and benefit professionals nationwide, issued the following statement today on the latest Congressional action on surprise billing:

"It's been more than two years since Congress promised to end this practice, where patients receive unexpected bills for treatment from providers outside their insurance network. Although action is desperately needed, we are disappointed that leaders decided on an agreement that allows independent arbitrators to settle disputes over surprise bills.

"We appreciate that we will now have action on this critical issue and are hopeful that it will bring relief to patients faced with exorbitant surprise medical bills. We remain concerned that arbitration is a very expensive solution, particularly for employers who self-insure and therefore are faced with paying 100% of the cost of arbitration. Every dollar they spend on arbitration is a dollar they can't spend on their employees' care, or on growing their businesses. We believe that this system of arbitration would lead to higher costs for insurers, businesses and patients alike.

"NAHU continues to advocate for a competitive payment benchmark to resolve out-of-network payment disputes between providers and insurers, with no need for costly arbitration. We will continue to support solutions that focus on the patient and are fair to the provider, with the overall goal of lowering healthcare costs for everyone.

"American healthcare consumers and small businesses are desperate for a solution to end surprise medical bills. We are hopeful that this proposed solution will be a first step toward a more cost-effective benchmarking approach."

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The National Association of Health Underwriters represents more than 100,000 professional health insurance agents and brokers who provide insurance for millions of Americans. NAHU is headquartered in Washington, DC. For more information, visit [www.nahu.org](http://www.nahu.org).