

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

tients in North Carolina. He called on the Trump administration to halt its plan to move forward with a dangerous policy for patients in private Medicare Advantage plans.

The policy is known as "step therapy." It limits the medical treatments that patients can receive. The new policy would have dire consequences for some of North Carolina's sickest Medicare patients.

Step therapy forces patients to begin treatment with a drug mandated by the insurance company. Physicians can only move patients to the treatment recommended by their doctor if the initial treatment fails - even if the doctor believes a different choice would be more effective for the patient. The Trump administration is allowing Medicare Advantage plans to adopt step therapy, beginning Jan. 1.

By opposing step therapy, Rep. Holding is setting aside party politics to side with North Carolina's patients. We applaud this stance, because as ophthalmologists, we know that sick patients - especially those facing permanent blindness - don't have the time for wait-and-see treatment policies. We urge others in Congress to join Rep. Holding in supporting patients over politics, and push back against step

therapy in Medicare Advantage.

- Kathleen G. Gordon, MD
President, NC Society of Eye
Physicians and Surgeons

Step therapy

U.S. Rep. George Holding took a bold step in support of vulnerable elderly and disabled pa-